

BI Norwegian Business School - Thesis

- Influencing supervisor ratings:  
three quasi-experiments-

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**Abstract**

In three experiments we investigated the relationship between a set of influence tactics and three work outcomes in organizations in which the supervisor rated his/her employees on; (a) competence assessment, (b) salary increase, and (c) job promotion. Results showed that rational persuasion produced better ratings than assertiveness with respect to all three work outcomes. However, using an external source for information produced the highest overall scores in two of the experiments. Further, our results indicated that there were significant differences between men and women when deciding whether to provide a positive competence assessment and job promotion for certain influence tactics. Implications and opportunities for future research were discussed.

*Keywords:* influence tactic, work outcome, supervisor rating, source credibility, gender, quasi-experiment, vignette

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## Introduction

Most employees hope to find themselves in a job situation that provides them with the opportunity to influence how their supervisor rates their competence, and as a result, acquire salary progression or a job promotion offer. According to Cialdini and Rhoads (2001), “principles that influence human psychology can be useful in a variety of situations, such as business dealings, societal interactions, and personal relationships” (p. 10). Additionally, influence tactics have shown to be well used both in everyday life and in organizations (Cialdini, 2009). Research on interpersonal influence in organizations has helped us gain insights regarding the antecedents of influence tactics in the work context. Moreover, an understanding of both the behavioral responses to and the outcomes of these strategies has been provided. Higgins, Judge, and Ferris (2003) have stated that the research for the last three decades particularly has focused on the interpersonal influence on decisions and human resource management systems, and among others, on outcomes of the performance evaluation process carried out by the supervisor (Cleveland & Murphy, 1992). In most organizations, evaluations of promotability are based on supervisors' perceptions, and hence, they are particularly susceptible to influence attempts (Thacker & Wayne, 1995). Heidemeier and Moser (2009) argued that supervisors were the most reliable source of job performance ratings. Additionally, promotability considerations are linked to career success through salary increase and promotions (e.g., Cooper, Graham, & Dyke, 1993; Ferris, Fedor, & King, 1994; Judge & Bretz, 1994) about which supervisors make decisions. Further, Thacker and Wayne (1995) argued that previous research indicated that influence tactics aimed to create impressions of competence, which subsequently might influence job-related outcomes, such as performance ratings, salary, or perceptions of promotability.

In general, different influence tactics have been found to be effective with different work outcomes (e.g., Chakrabarty, Brown, & Widing II 2010; Higgins et al., 2003; Higgins & Judge, 2004; Stern & Westphal, 2010; Yukl & Tracey, 1992; Westphal & Stern, 2006, 2007). As some influence tactics are more effective for achieving certain work outcomes than others, knowledge about which tactics to apply and for what purpose should be relevant for all employees who aim to influence their supervisors' ratings. Despite more than thirty years of extensive research on influence tactics, studies have not successfully elucidated which

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influence tactic is the most effective in obtaining the three work outcomes of performance assessment, salary increase, and promotion (Higgins et al. 2003; Lai, 2005). Moreover, one of the most important research challenges in the domain of persuasion within organizations is to shed light on the effectiveness of specific influence tactics in lateral as well as vertical influence attempts (Lai, 2005). Accordingly, we have intended to find out which influence tactic was the most effective for one aiming to achieve positive competence assessment, salary increase, and job promotion, and more specifically we intended to examine the effectiveness of employees' use of upward influence attempts towards their supervisors in attaining these work outcomes as a result of supervisor ratings. The single influence tactics we investigated are rational persuasion, assertiveness, ingratiation, and exchange.

Further, researchers have requested a more thorough investigation of the combinations of different influence tactics (Falbe & Yukl, 1992; Higgins et al., 2003). If some influence tactics are more beneficial than others in obtaining positive work outcomes, it might be assumed that certain combinations of influence tactics will be equally or even more beneficial than the use of other influence tactic combinations. In the compilation of their meta-analysis, Higgins et al. (2003) found no studies examining the effects of influence tactic combinations on the work outcomes mentioned, and this highlights a possible gap in the literature. We have argued that research on the combinations of influence tactics is needed to gain a more complete understanding and valuable insight into individuals who want to improve their influence on supervisor ratings. We considered knowledge about single influence tactics effectiveness to be vital when examining combinations of influence tactics. Thus, we wanted to combine pairs of influence tactics in order to consider their effectiveness in comparison with another combination. Higgins et al. (2003) argued that rational persuasion in combination with ingratiation might increase the likelihood of achieving work outcomes. In this study, we intended to combine ingratiation & rational persuasion in order to investigate if this combination was equal to or more beneficial than other combinations of influence tactics. Further, research has found that assertiveness can be useful for eliciting compliance, especially when combined with rational persuasion (Falbe & Yukl, 1992). Hence, we have argued that assertiveness is also important to consider when used alone and in

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combination with other influence tactics, and accordingly, we have included a combination of assertiveness & rational persuasion.

Additionally, we wanted to extend the research field of influence tactics by considering whether there exists influence approaches other than the use of influence tactics. We have questioned whether there are any situations where a neutral approach can help one achieve desired work outcomes, or if there are other factors that better explain the results found for such an influence attempt.

Further, considering the demographical characteristics, gender and age, we wanted to study what roles these individual characteristics played regarding the relationship between influence tactics and work outcomes. Previous research has argued that men and women use different influence tactics (e.g., Barbuto, Fritz, Matkin, & Marx, 2007; Carli, 2001; Carothers & Allen, 1999). Drawing on this finding, we wanted to study whether gender plays a role when influence tactics are applied to achieve work outcomes. Additionally, we wanted to examine whether age relates to the perceptions of influence tactics.

### **Theoretical Background**

According to Higgins et al. (2003), the influence tactic construct has its origins in various other concepts, such as impression management, political influence behavior, organizational politics, and influence tactics. Although we have examined sources that use a variety of word choices and terminologies, we made use of Higgins et al.'s (2003) terminology, which considered influence tactics as the main concept and related it to the work outcomes: performance assessment, salary increase, and job promotion. However, our research differed from Higgins et al. (2003) in one respect, as we applied the concept we have denoted as *positive competence assessment* instead of performance assessment. This choice was made due to the framework of this study as we have argued that competence assessments consider shorter work episodes than performance assessments.

“Influence is a process in which individuals modify others’ behavior, thoughts, and feelings” (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009; French & Raven, 1959). Since it was first introduced by Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson (1980), there has been a huge interest in the role that influence tactics play in organizations. Influence attempts

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in organizations take place in various directions of relations; between peers, signifying a lateral movement, and between managers and subordinates, which occurs vertically (Lai, 2005). Further still, the vertical influence can be divided into upward and downward influence. Our study focused on the upward influence attempts as we explored how employees can influence their supervisor most effectively, which is expressed through ratings by the supervisor. Viswesvaran, Ones, and Schmidt (1996) stated that performance ratings are the most prevalent way to measure job performance. Further, they (1996) argued that ratings are subjective evaluations obtained from supervisors, peers, or through self-evaluation, but also that supervisor ratings are the most common source.

Previous research has grouped influence tactics into two main streams (van Knippenberg & Steensma, 2003). Whereas some researchers have made three categories—soft, hard, and rational (Kipnis et al., 1980)—many have only applied two, soft and hard (Falbe & Yukl, 1992; van Knippenberg & Steensma, 2003). Thus, we used the latter where rationality and ingratiation (van Knippenberg & Steensma, 2003) belong to the soft category, and assertiveness (Kipnis et al., 1980) and exchange (Berson & Sosik, 2007) are considered to be hard influence tactics. Soft influence tactics characteristically give the target freedom as to whether he/she would like to comply, while hard tactics apply a more forceful influence approach (van Knippenberg & Steensma, 2003). They (2003) further stated that the soft influence tactics contain relatively low levels of control compared to hard influence tactics. Hard influence tactics are usually seen as more coercive and controlling from the target's point of view (van Knippenberg & Steensma, 2003). Previous research has found that soft influence tactics are employed more often than hard ones. And despite the varying frequency of hard and soft influence tactic use, there seems to be a consistent general preference for soft influence tactics over hard influence tactics (van Knippenberg & Steensma, 2003). Further, Falbe, and Yukl (1992) agreed, adding that the so-called hard influence tactics are generally less effective than the soft influence tactics.

Power, as several have suggested, is another important element in the field of persuasion and influence (French & Raven, 1968; Yukl & Falbe, 1990). Power can be defined as: “the ability to provide or withhold valued resources or administer punishments” (Anderson & Berdahl 2002, p. 1362). Another definition

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emphasizes one's ability to influence others (Galinsky, Magee, Inesi & Gruenfeld, 2006). In accordance with Gruenfeld, Inesi, Magee, and Galinsky (2008), we named this ability social power. Eaton, Visser, Krosnick, and Anand (2009) argued that power could increase the likelihood of an influence attempt's success. They (2009) argued that middle-aged adults tend to be more resistant to attitudinal change than younger and older adults, and proposed that this is partly due to the fact that social power peaks in midlife (Eaton et al., 2009). However, power also stems from different sources other than demographic factors, e.g., reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert power (French & Raven, 1968), information power, and persuasiveness (Yukl & Falbe, 1991). Assuming that there is an apparent link between ratings and administrative outcomes, Cleveland and Murphy (1992) stated that the supervisor possesses significant coercive power and can offer rewards to influence valued outcomes.

In 1980, Kipnis et al. conducted an exploratory study investigating influence tactics used by people at work to influence their superiors, co-workers, and subordinates. Based on a factor analysis, eight factors, or influence tactics, emerged. Four of these factors are assertiveness, ingratiation, rationality, and exchange. Further, Yukl and Falbe (1990) conducted a study aimed at replicating and extending the previous work by Kipnis et al. (1980) who also found eight influence tactics, where four of these are ingratiation, exchange, pressure tactics, and rational persuasion. According to Yukl and Falbe (1990) the latter two influence tactics are similar to assertiveness and rationality, respectively.

In order to study the various influence tactics, we found it appropriate to apply the extended version of the Influence Behavior Questionnaire (IBQ-G) developed by Yukl, Seifert and Chavez (2008) that measured eleven influence tactics. The IBQ-G is a questionnaire designed to measure the target's perception of an agents' use of proactive influence tactics in an attempt to influence the target (Yukl et al., 2008). More specifically, IBQ-G was developed for the target to rate their leader's behavior. Yukl et al. (2008) stated that the IBQ-G is the best validated measure of proactive influence tactics. Indeed, it has proven support for the validity and reliability of the eleven tactic scales, and is also a comprehensive and applicable questionnaire for both research and practice (Yukl et al., 2008). The eleven proactive influence tactics covered in the questionnaire are the following:

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pressure, coalition, rational persuasion, consultation, inspirational appeal, collaboration, apprising, ingratiation, exchange, personal appeals, and legitimating. An agent version of the Influence Behavior Questionnaire exists, but as few studies have applied the scale and the questionnaire has not been validated sufficiently it seems prudent to apply the target version of the IBQ-G in our research on influence tactics.

The influence tactic, rational persuasion, involves using logical arguments and factual evidence (Kipnis et al., 1980; Yukl & Falbe, 1990). Yukl and Tracey (1992) have found that rational persuasion is the most used influence tactic in an upward direction. In Higgins et al.'s (2003) meta-analysis, a positive effect between rational persuasion and performance assessments, job promotions, and salary increases was found.

In order to emphasize rational persuasion's effectiveness on work outcomes, we wanted to compare it with an influence tactic that differed in characteristics and pointed to mixed research findings. That influence tactic is assertiveness which involves forceful arguments and the use of demands or intimidation (Kipnis et al., 1980; Yukl & Falbe, 1990). According to Yukl and Falbe (1990), this is an influence tactic that involves a person using demands, threats, or intimidation in order to get the target to comply with the requests. While Higgins et al. (2003) found a positive relationship between assertiveness and salary increase and job promotion, respectively, a negative relationship was found between assertiveness and performance assessment.

Another influence tactic that led to positive results in Higgins et al.'s (2003) meta-analysis is ingratiation, which implies adulation and aims to exercise influence on a person in order to support a proposal or carry out a request (Yukl et al., 2008). Ingratiation has, as rational persuasion, also been extensively studied, and the results have suggested that this influence tactic is perceived as the most effective in achieving work outcomes (Higgins et al., 2003).

In strong contradiction to ingratiation, the influence tactic exchange has not received much research attention (Yukl & Tracey, 1992). According to Yukl et al. (2008), exchange occurs when an agent offers something the target person wants,

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or offers to reciprocate at a later time, if the target will do what the agent requests. Few studies have examined this influence tactic in relation to work outcomes (Higgins et al., 2003), and the results for exchange in the contexts it has been studied were not as clear and consistent as they were for ingratiation (Yukl & Tracey, 1992). In order to respond to this research gap, we also wanted to take this influence tactic into consideration. Further, we argued that exchange needs to be studied together with a key influence tactic such as ingratiation in order to reveal how effective this influence tactic really is when considering the work outcomes positive competence assessment, job promotion, and salary increase. Altogether, we saw it as vital to both investigate well-studied influence tactics and a less-studied influence tactic in order to assist employees in choosing the most effective influence tactics in the aim of influencing their supervisor's ratings on the listed work outcomes.

In their study of work outcome performance assessment, Cleveland and Murphy (1992) argued that influence tactics can be utilized in a performance assessment situation to influence the supervisor, and subsequently the performance ratings positively. They (1992) have also distinguished these three outcomes, stating that one of the performance assessment's purposes is to identify individuals with potential for promotion. After this assessment, decisions about promotion and salary increases were made. Hence, performance assessment can be applied to the influence of the other two outcomes of interest (Thacker & Wayne, 1995). Higgins et al. (2003) emphasized that as performance assessments usually occur more frequently than both pay raises and promotions, they are also likely to occur closer in time to the use of influence tactics. Consequently, there is less of a chance for external factors to intervene and weaken the effect the influence tactic might have. As a result, Higgins et al. (2003) stated that it seems likely that influence tactics would have stronger effects on performance assessments than on measures of promotions and salary increase. Therefore, we considered the influence tactics in this study to have had a stronger effect on positive competence assessment than on promotion or salary increase.

Further, we wanted to include a neutral condition in two of the experiments in which no tactic is used. Except from a study conducted in the field of impression management with an employment interview as the work outcome, no research has

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to our knowledge included such a neutral condition (Proost, Schreurs, De Witte and Derous, 2010). However, Proost et al. (2010) designed the control condition somewhat differently than what we have done. The impression management tactic conditions included in Proost et al.'s (2010) study were ingratiation, self-promotion, or a combination of them, and the impression management tactics were applied when the candidate answered interview questions. In contradiction to the conditions containing impression management tactics, neutral answers, without any employment of these tactics, were applied in the neutral condition. Their (2010) results suggested that it is better to use any type of impression management tactics in the interview than to use no tactic at all.

We would like to stress that the neutral influence which we tried to elaborate on in our study should not be mixed with the concepts of a neutral way to influence others (Schermerhorn & Bond, 1991). Neither should it be mixed with the group of neutral influence tactics including rationality and exchange in the meta-analysis by Smith, Watkins, Burke, Christian, Smith, Hall, and Simms (2013).

We have considered the inclusion of a heuristic theory in this study to be of value, as it can enrich our understanding of how the mind functions when being presented with influence tactics as stimuli. Kahneman (2011) argued that the human mind possesses two ways of thinking, naming them System 1 and System 2. Since both systems have individual abilities, functions, and limitations, Kahneman (2011) categorized them as traits and dispositions of two characters in our minds. We constantly perceive our surroundings. System 1 runs automatically, is quick, and often entails unconscious processes. Additionally, these processes exist with no feeling of voluntary control or with little or no effort, or cognitive ease, such as with routine decisions (Kahneman, 2011). Our associative memory is the core of System 1 and constantly constructs an interpretation of what is going on in our surroundings. Contrarily, when demands exist and effort is mobilized, we experience cognitive strain and need help from System 2. If our associative machine runs smoothly we are more likely to hold biased beliefs (Kahneman, 2011). In contradiction to System 1, the operations in System 2 are controlled, effortful, and involve complex computations. By this description we understand why it is called the working mind or the mental arithmetic system. According to Kahneman (2011), one tends to experience

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choice, concentration, and agency when these processes come to mind. Kahneman (2011) characterized System 2 as the conscious reasoning self that has beliefs, makes choices, and decides what to do and think about. This system is based on System 1's operations' involving the effortless, originating impressions and feelings which become the main source for explicit beliefs and deliberate choices in System 2. Additionally, System 2 monitors thoughts and actions proposed by System 1, with the result of suppressing or modifying some behaviors as well as some actions to be expressed directly. Hence, System 2 can overrule the associations and impulses of System 1. Based on Kahneman's (2011) theory we have claimed that people interpret, evaluate, and select their answer regarding the three work outcomes in one of these two ways when either consciously or unconsciously exposed to influence tactics.

Previous research has indicated that men and women use different influence tactics (e.g., Barbuto et al., 2007; Carli, 2001; Carothers & Allen, 1999). Additionally, the genders seem to favor their own sex when falling victim to manipulation efforts (Drory & Beaty, 1991). A considerable amount of research has indicated that the differences are due to stereotyping and socialization processes and norms that enforce the stereotypes about gender behavior (Carli, 2001; Mainiero, 1986; Smith et al., 2013; Tepper, Brown & Hunt, 1993). In line with this, Kipnis and Schmidt (1988) claimed that upward influence tactics might have different effects for men and women on outcomes such as promotability assessments and salary attainment. For instance, women who applied ingratiation behavior (e.g., by trying to be likeable) received better performance evaluations than those females who did not, whereas this was not the case for men (Kipnis & Schmidt, 1988). Drawing on these findings, we studied whether gender acts as a moderator when influence tactics are applied to achieve the work outcomes.

In this study, we expected to find that rational persuasion is a more effective influence tactic than assertiveness when aiming to receive a positive competence assessment, promotion offer, and salary increase. Further, we believed that ingratiation would be more effective than exchange when trying to obtain the three work outcomes. Furthermore, we expected to find all the four above mentioned influence tactics to be more effective than a neutral approach when one aims to receive a positive competence assessment, job promotion, and salary

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increase. Regarding combinations of influence tactics, we expected to find a greater likelihood of getting a positive competence assessment, and obtaining a promotion and salary increase offer when rational persuasion is applied in combination with ingratiation, than when rational persuasion is applied in combination with assertiveness. Lastly, we have claimed that the genders differ in how they perceive influence tactics, which affects how the two genders rate the work outcomes.

Concluding, the purpose of this study was to identify which upward influence approach is the most effective when aiming to obtain the work outcomes positive competence assessment, job promotion, and salary increase. We aimed to build on and extend the previous research which implies that we have considered the well-studied influence tactics rational persuasion, ingratiation, and assertiveness. Additionally, we examined a less-studied influence tactic, exchange. Further we intended to study the phenomenon of a neutral approach. Additionally, we examined combinations of influence tactics and compared the pairs with one another. Lastly, we studied the moderating effect of gender in order to better understand which influence tactics are most effective in obtaining the three specific work outcomes, positive competence assessment, job promotion, and salary increase.

Our research question was as follows:

“What is the most effective upward influence approach when aiming to obtain a positive competence assessment, get a job promotion offer, and a salary increase offer?”

### **Experiments and hypotheses**

In this study, we used empirical research methods which examined various influence tactics and how they affected the three work outcomes, positive competence assessment, job promotion, and salary increase. The three quasi-experiments (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991) which make use of vignettes, were separated, but interrelated in method, content and implications. The first experiment studied the use of rational persuasion and assertiveness, comparing the influence tactics with a control condition that used no influence tactic. Further, the second experiment examined ingratiation and exchange and replicated the control

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condition from experiment 1. The third experiment studied the effect of combinations of influence tactics, with ingratiation & rational persuasion as one condition, and assertiveness & rational persuasion as the second condition. Finally, we have studied whether gender moderates the relationship between single and combinations of influence tactics, respectively, and work outcomes.

### **Experiment 1**

The purpose of this experiment was to examine whether rational persuasion is a more effective influence tactic than assertiveness in obtaining the work outcomes. Also, we wanted to investigate whether these influence tactics were more effective than a neutral condition in obtaining the work outcomes.

Cable and Judge (2003) defined rational persuasion as “using logical arguments and factual evidence to persuade a target that a request will result in the attainment of task objectives” (p. 199). This means that people who use this technique to exert influence over someone else focus on objective data and facts in order to form their arguments in a way that supports their opinion and makes it seem more preferable compared to a given alternative (Kipnis et al., 1980). Yukl and Tracey (1992) described rational persuasion as a flexible influence tactic, meaning that it can be used both between peers, as well as between subordinates and supervisors.

In addition to the influence tactic rational persuasion, we also studied assertiveness. Kipnis et al. (1980) defined this influence tactic as using a forceful manner in order to attain objectives. In a study by Yukl and Falbe (1990), the researchers found that assertiveness is most often used in attempts to influence downward in the hierarchy rather than upward. Further, according to Yukl and Falbe (1990), using a single soft tactic is more effective than using a single hard tactic. In addition, Higgins et al. (2003) found that rational persuasion was positively related to performance assessments, while assertiveness had a negative relationship with this work outcome. Based on this research, we therefore suggested that using rational persuasion as an influence tactic would yield better results than using assertiveness when trying to obtain any of the three work outcomes. Hence, we hypothesized that:

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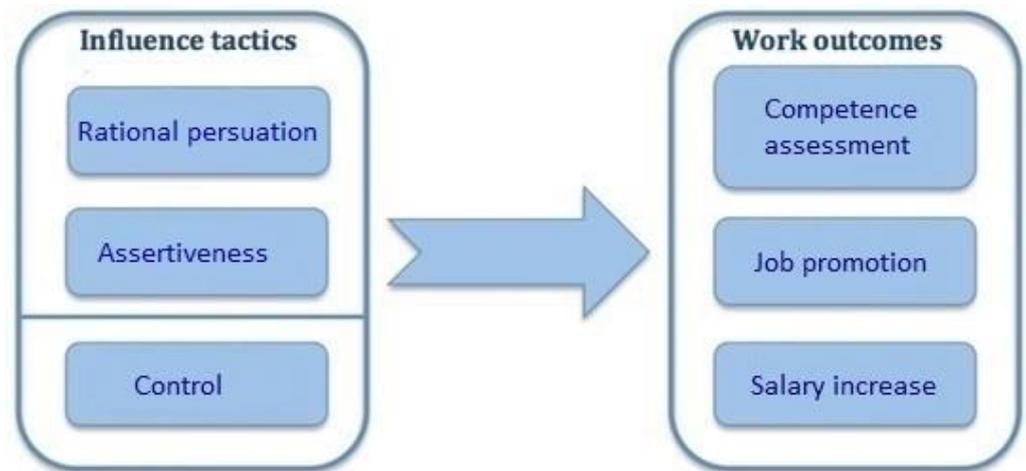
Hypothesis 1: *Participants in the rational persuasion condition are more inclined to a) provide a positive competence assessment, b) give job promotion, and c) give salary increase than the participants in the assertiveness condition.*

In addition to the comparison of the two influence tactics' effects on the three work outcomes, we also wanted to compare the influence tactics with the setting that issues no influence tactic. Considering the nature of influence tactics it is reasonable to expect these to be effective in attaining the work outcomes. Both rational persuasion and assertiveness have been found empirically to be effective on different work outcomes. As previously mentioned, Higgins et al. (2003) found a positive effect between rational persuasion and the three work outcomes and between assertiveness and salary increases and job promotions. Another important aspect regarding assertiveness has to do with the level of dominance an individual has in a given situation. Anderson and Kilduff (2009) found that, in a group setting, those with higher scores on the dominance trait obtained higher levels of influence. They also discussed that the reason behind this effect could be that people who scored high on this trait might have behaved in a way that made them appear more competent than they really are (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009). Higgins et al. (2003) stated that the reason for the negative effect between assertiveness and performance assessment could be that assertive individuals are more aggressive in seeking out salary increases and job promotions than in being part of performance assessments. However, we hoped to overcome this problem by manipulating the variables in a controlled experiment. Thus, we hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 2: *Participants in the rational persuasion condition and the assertiveness condition will be more inclined to a) provide a positive competence assessment, b) give job promotion, and c) give salary increase than participants in the control condition.*

See figure 1 below for the conceptual model of experiment 1.

Figure 1

*Conceptual model of experiment 1***Method.*****Participants.***

The sample in the experiment was a convenience sample (Black, 2009), consisting of Norwegian-speaking students from the campus at BI Norwegian Business School in Oslo. The data collection was conducted during a two-day period at the school's library. We used a between-subject design, which implies that each subject was assigned to only one treatment condition (Pany & Reckers, 1987); either to one of the two experimental groups or the control group. We chose this design in order to exclude the possibility that the participants' scores were influenced by experience gained in other treatment conditions. A total of 178 students were asked if they would like to participate in a short experiment. Of the 178 asked, 150 agreed to participate, which altogether made up a response rate of 84%. Each condition consisted of 50 participants, and though we did not collect gender data from the participants, approximately half of the sample was males and the other half was females. Before the experiment began, the participants were instructed to read through a text before answering three questions, which altogether formed the vignette. Information was provided suggesting that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions and that all responses would remain confidential.

***Measures.***

In this experiment we studied three dependent variables: positive competence assessment, job promotion, and salary increase. Each of the dependent variables reflected the three different questions in the vignettes. They were coded as

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competent, promotion, and salary. All measures were rated on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (e.g., very incompetent) to 7 (e.g., very competent). The measures of the independent variables, rational persuasion and assertiveness, were inspired by the items for the two tactics listed in the IBQ-G by Yukl et al. (2008) and were made into several sentences describing an employee named Robert. In order to measure the impact of the different influence tactics in the experiment, a control condition was developed. The vignette for the control condition had the same introduction and questions as the previous two conditions, but rather than Robert describing himself and his work achievements, Robert was described by his supervisor.

### ***Experiment procedure and text creation.***

We have made use of vignettes which denoted hypothetical situations presented to respondents in order to obtain an opinion about anticipated behavior (Caro, Ho, McFadden, Gottlieb, Yee, Chan & Winter, 2012). Caro et al. (2012) argued that vignettes postulate that the responses to hypothetical choices provide insights about behavior in real-life situations. More especially, we have applied a contrastive technique which means that we have varied the vignette structure systematically so that the participants are being asked to respond to somewhat different vignette content (Carothers & Allen, 1999). We created three various vignettes for this experiment, one for each condition. Extracts of the vignettes for each of the conditions are seen below.

Extract of the rational persuasion vignette:

*As you probably know, I have a master's degree in finance from a well-known business school and I have shown good results during my time in the company. These results can be documented. In addition to having higher education, I also have several years of experience from various companies in different industries. This could be the some of the reasons why my colleagues asks for my guidance and help... (Appendix 1a)*

Extract of the assertiveness vignette:

*... it is not difficult for me to find another job or focus more on myself instead of putting the company first. Losing me as an employee will be a huge loss for the company and I expect you to make the right decision. Hiring me is the best option. (Appendix 2a)*

Extract of the control vignette:

*Robert has a master's degree in finance from a well-known business school and has shown good results during his time in the company. In addition to having higher education, he also has several years of experience from various companies in different industries. His colleagues ask for his guidance and help... (Appendix 3a)*

In order to avoid a potential language problem, considering that Norwegian is the participants' native language, the vignettes were handed out to the participants in Norwegian (appendix 1b, 2b, and 3b). Ten copies of each vignette were tested in a pilot study with thirty respondents in total. After the pilot study, we asked the respondents questions about what impressions they had about Robert and the vignette in general. This was done in order to prevent mistakes that we might have overlooked. The feedback provided by the respondents gave valuable insights and new reflections, revealing that the assertiveness vignette needed some adjustments. For instance, the sentence: "I will push them in the right direction" was changed to "I might push them in the right direction" in order to moderate the degree of aggressive behavior for assertiveness. The vignette for the control condition proved to be more challenging than expected since Robert was applying for a project manager position he clearly wanted. The task of making a neutral condition seemed almost impossible. After several drafts we agreed to introduce a new approach: to let Robert's supervisor describe him instead. This seemed natural since Robert's supervisor has less of an incentive to exaggerate Robert's competence and skills. The response sheet contained three questions, one for each of the work outcomes studied (appendix 4a and 4b).

**Results.** One of the purposes of this experiment was to study whether rational persuasion is a more effective influence tactic than assertiveness in achieving the work outcomes. After conducting the experiment we ran a one-way ANOVA. By examining the descriptive statistics, we found the mean scores of rational persuasion to be higher than assertiveness regarding all three work outcomes. Furthermore, both rational persuasion and assertiveness achieved higher mean scores on competent than for promotion and salary. Table 1, which summarizes the descriptive statistics, and means and standard deviations for both conditions are illustrated in figure 2, which are both seen below.

Table 1

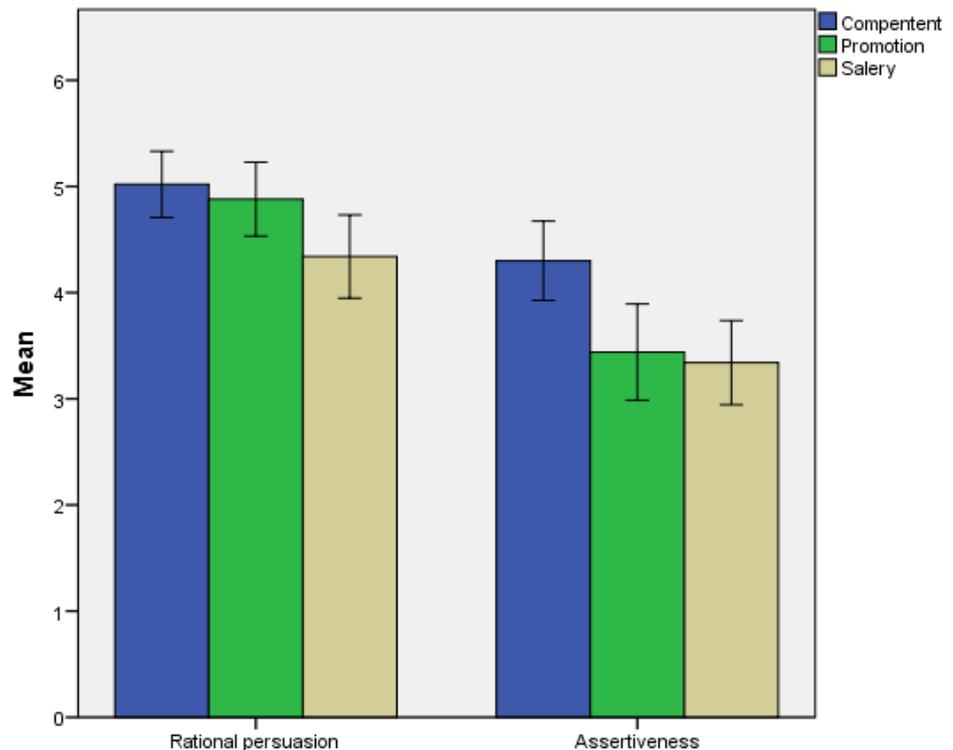
*Descriptive statistics*

Condition	Competent	Promotion	Salary
Rational persuasion	5.02 / 1.09	4.88 / 1.22	4.34 / 1.37
Assertiveness	4.30 / 1.31	3.44 / 1.59	3.34 / 1.39
Control	5.78 / 0.93	5.82 / 0.94	4.76 / 1.11

Note. The results are displayed as follows; *M / SD*

Figure 2

*Means and standard deviations for rational persuasion and assertiveness*



The one-way ANOVA indicated that the mean scores of the two influence tactics were significantly different from each other ( $p = .000$ ). We also conducted a Post-

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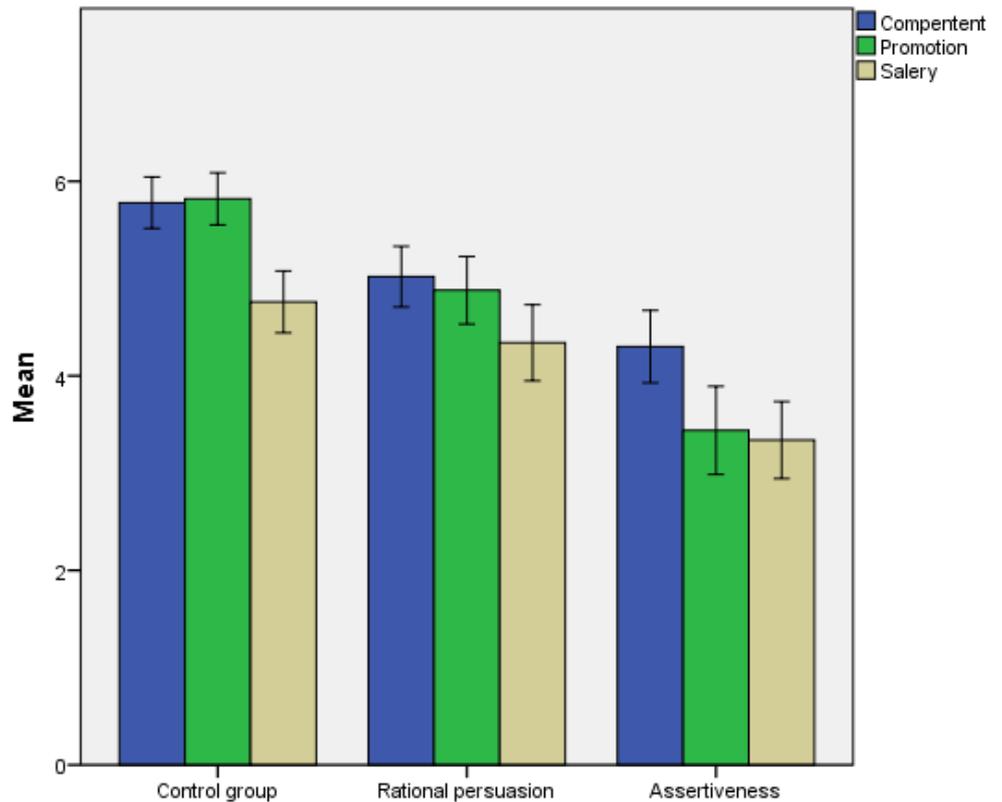
Hoc Tukey analysis, which “tests for differences among all possible combinations of groups” (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010, p. 442). This test revealed that the two influence tactics were also significantly different from each other on all three work outcomes, and more specifically on competent ( $p = .005$ ), promotion ( $p = .000$ ), and salary ( $p = .001$ ). These findings gave support for hypotheses 1a), 1b), and 1c).

Additionally, we wanted to study whether rational persuasion and assertiveness are more effective than a control condition in achieving the work outcomes. Hence, we also included a control condition in this experiment: Instead of having Robert describe himself and consequently make an attempt to influence the participants, his supervisor gave a description of him. This was done in an effort to remove the source of the influence attempt, and thereby the influence tactics. Whether this was accomplished is questionable and will later be discussed. Moreover, we received some interesting results when including the control condition.

The mean scores of the control condition are seen in table 1 on the previous page. Furthermore, figure 3, which illustrates the means and standard deviations for all three conditions, is seen below.

Figure 3

*Means and standard deviations for control, rational persuasion, and assertiveness*



The one-way ANOVA showed that control had significantly higher means than both rational persuasion ( $p = .000$ ) and assertiveness ( $p = .000$ ). The Post-Hoc Tukey analysis revealed that the control was significantly different from rational persuasion ( $p = .003$ ) and assertiveness ( $p = .003$ ) on competent. Further, control was significantly different from rational persuasion ( $p = .001$ ) and assertiveness ( $p = .000$ ) on promotion. For salary, control was significantly different from assertiveness ( $p = .000$ ), but control and rational persuasion were not significantly different from each other. Thus, hypotheses 2a), 2b), and 2c) were not supported. We considered this to be a surprising finding, as we assumed that influence tactics would be the most effective influence approach when aiming to achieve the three work outcomes in this study. We will investigate this notion further in the second experiment.

## Experiment 2

One of the purposes of this experiment was to study whether ingratiation is a more effective influence tactic than exchange in achieving the work outcomes. Second,

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we wanted to replicate the design from experiment 1 in order to study whether ingratiation and exchange are more effective than control in achieving the work outcomes. Third, we studied whether gender moderates the relationship between influence tactics and work outcomes.

Ingratiation can be defined as an agent's use of praise and flattery before or during an attempt to influence the target person to carry out a request or support a proposal (Yukl et al., 2008). Ingratiation is, as rational persuasion, a soft tactic which encompasses influence attempts designed to secure compliance (Botero, Foste & Pace, 2012; Higgins et al., 2003). Ingratiation has received considerable research attention and research shows a strong positive relationship between ingratiation and work outcomes (Higgins et al., 2003). Many definitions of this influence tactic exist, and each focus on different dimensions of ingratiation behavior, similar compliance, self-promotion, flattery, and opinion conformity (e.g. Botero et al., 2012; Higgins, 2003; Jones, 1964; Yukl et al., 2008). By focusing on the agent's use of flattery and praise, Yukl et al. (2008) positioned themselves in the other-enhancement dimension of ingratiation. This is only one out of three distinct behaviors ingratiation behavior can be expressed as (Gordon, 1996; Jones, 1964; Westpahl & Stern, 2006, 2007).

Exchange, however, has received less attention in the literature (Higgins et al., 2003), and is a hard influence tactic that aims to influence targets through greed and fear (Berson & Sosik, 2007). This influence tactic involves offering and giving something desired by the target, if she or he meets the agreed-upon performance expectations, which implies that one offers incentives or an exchange of favors (Berson & Sosik, 2007). As mentioned, exchange has not been studied that extensively (Higgins et al., 2003), but Falbe and Yukl (1992) argued that an agent is most likely to use this influence tactic when the target is reluctant to do what the agent wants without an additional inducement. Further, Yukl and Tracey (1992) found that exchange was applied more in a lateral direction and less in an upward direction. Also in this experiment, we test both influence tactics in an upward direction. Further, Yukl and Falbe (1990) stated that the use of a single soft influence tactic, such as ingratiation, is more effective than using a single hard influence tactic. Additionally, since ingratiation is regarded as the most effective influence tactic on work outcomes (Higgins et al., 2003), we suggested that using ingratiation as an influence tactic will yield better results than using

exchange when trying to obtain any of the three work outcomes. Hence, we hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 3: Participants in the ingratiation condition will be more inclined to a) provide a positive competence assessment, b) give job promotion, and c) give salary increase than the participants in the exchange condition.*

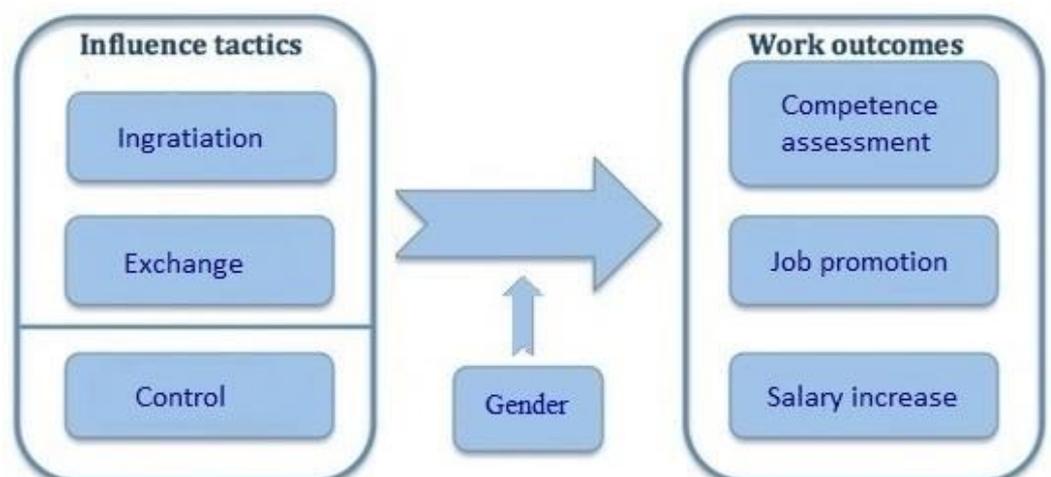
To further investigate the findings for control in experiment 1, we wanted to compare the ingratiation and exchange with a neutral influence attempt. Depending on our results, we aimed to understand which psychological phenomenon control really consists of. Ingratiation is perceived as the most effective influence tactic on work outcomes (Higgins et al., 2003), and although the results for exchange are lacking in this field of research, we argued that the use of both influence tactics would be more beneficial than the use of a neutral influence attempt. Therefore we hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 4: Participants in the ingratiation and exchange condition will be more inclined to a) provide positive competence assessment, b) job promotion, and c) salary increase than participants in the control condition.*

See figure 4 with the conceptual model of experiment 2 below.

Figure 4

*Conceptual model of experiment 2*



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According to Barbuto et al. (2007) there is extensive evidence for the notion that men and women apply various influence tactics (e.g., Carli, 2001; Carothers & Allen, 1999). If certain influence tactics are preferred by the different genders, these preferences might be important when determining the effectiveness of the individual influence tactics in our experiments. Drory and Beaty (1991) have conducted research on political influence attempts in organizations. Pettigrew, Pfeffer, Frost, and Hayes (as cited in Drory & Beaty, 1991) referred to organizational politics as informal influence attempts that aim to protect or enhance a person's share of organizational resources and benefits which among others, are related to promotion and staffing. Their findings suggested that men were more accepting of political behavior than women. Furthermore, Drory and Beaty (1991) argued that respondents viewed political manipulators of their own sex more favorably than influence originating from the opposite sex. This appeared to be a meaningful coalition where organizational members were inclined to react to organizational events in favor of their own gender. Since the participants in this experiment were supposed to assess a male on the three work outcomes, we believed that the individual participant would rate Robert in favor of their own gender. Hence, we hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 5: When the influence tactics ingratiation and exchange are applied, gender acts as a moderator in the inclination to a) provide a positive competence assessment, b) give job promotion, and c) give salary increase.*

### **Method.**

#### ***Participants.***

In experiment 2 we also applied a convenience sample (Black, 2009), consisting of Norwegian-speaking students and employees from three small-medium sized Norwegian organizations from our network. The recruitment of participants was divided in two; the student sample were approached and recruited during a one-day period at the campus at BI Norwegian Business School in Oslo. The three organizations received an email with the electronic version of the vignettes, and the organizational members had a week to respond before they received a reminder. We applied a between-subject design, in which each participant is randomly assigned to one treatment condition (Pany & Reckers, 1987)—either one of the two experimental groups or the control group. A total of 64 students

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and 52 employees were asked if they would like to participate in a short experiment. Of the 116 asked, 60 of the students, and 36 of the employees agreed to participate, and they were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions. This gave a total sample of 96 participants, and 32, 33, and 31 participants, respectively, in each condition, which altogether made up a response rate of 83%. Information about the participants' gender and age was collected. Fifty-two participants were males (54%) and 44 were females (46%). The age ranged from 19 to 69 years; 3 participants were younger than 20 years old; 56 participants were in their 20s; 14 participants were in their 30s; 16 participants were in their 40s; 3 participants were in their 50s; and 4 participants were in their 60s. Before the experiment began, the participants were instructed to read through a vignette before answering five questions. Information was provided that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions and that all responses would remain confidential.

### *Measures.*

In addition to the three dependent variables—competence assessment, job promotion, and salary increase—we also included the two demographic variables age and gender since we did not ask the participants in the previous experiment. By controlling for these two variables, we could analyze the variables' moderator effects. The dependent variables were coded as competent, promotion, and salary. Furthermore, we dummy-coded gender and age as follows: gender, 0 = female and 1 = male, and for the age variable; - 20 = 1; 21-29 = 2; 30-39 = 3; 40-49 = 4; 50-59 = 5; 60-69 = 6, and 70 - = 7. Each of the dependent variables reflected three out of the five questions in the vignettes. The last two questions represented the independent variables and all measures were rated on a seven-point Likert scale. For the dependent variables, the seven-point Likert scale ranged from 1 (e.g., very incompetent) to 7 (e.g., very competent) and the measures of age ranged from 1 (e.g., less than 20 years) to 7 (e.g., more than 70 years).

As in the previous experiment, the measures of the two influence tactics examined here, ingratiation and exchange, were inspired by the items for each of the tactics in the IBQ-G by Yukl et al. (2008) and were made into several sentences describing the employee Robert. In order to compare the two influence tactics

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with a neutral vignette, we made use of the control condition developed in experiment 1.

***Experiment procedure and text creation.***

We created two new vignettes and used almost the same control text as in experiment 1. The three changes in the introduction to the control text (appendix 7a) was a change in the title from an “HR consultant” to a “manager” and from a “Telephone company” to a “medium sized Norwegian company.” And lastly, we changed a sentence from “his supervisor has sent you a description of him and asked you to give an evaluation of him” to “we have received the following information about him.” This was done in order to avoid possible misunderstandings and to make the introduction more general. Extracts of the vignettes for the ingratiation and exchange condition are seen below.

Extract of the ingratiation vignette:

*... When I was told it was you who were to select the new Project Manager I knew it was the most qualified of us to be given that task. ... As a manager you have always seen your subordinates and their needs. I am thankful for everything I have learned from you, and for being so fortunate to work with you (Appendix 5a)*

Extract of the exchange vignette:

*... If you are able to influence that decision so that I acquire the position, you will always have support in me. And in these turbulent times it is always good to know that you have someone to support you 100%. If you help me now, I want you to know that you can ask me for any favor, whatever it may be, in the future... (Appendix 6a)*

In order to avoid a potential language problem, considering that Norwegian is the participants’ native language, the vignettes were handed out to the participants in Norwegian (appendix 5b, 6b, and 7b). Ten copies of the ingratiation and exchange condition were tested in two pilot studies with 40 respondents in total. After the

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first pilot, we realized that the scale on one question had been reversed to range from 7 (e.g., very competent) to 1 (e.g., very incompetent) and that this scale difference gave deviant responses from the two former questions. We believed this was due to the response scales' difference from the two previous questions. After correcting this error, the second pilot was carried out more successfully and some feedback was provided by the respondents on the response sheet (appendix 10a and 10b). It revealed that the nature of the vignette was more inclined to a regular way of presenting response options in the second pilot.

We contacted the three organizations which agreed to participate, and lists of the organizational members' emails were submitted. In collaboration with the contact person in each organization, an email with general information and a request to help us with our study was sent to all the organizational participants prior to the email containing the vignette. The vignettes were made electronically by the software provided by SurveyMonkey. We copied the format from the paper-based vignettes into the software. After conducting smaller formatting adjustments, the link to the online vignette was converted to a URL and implemented into the email which was sent to the participants in agreement with the organizations. All email addresses were provided by the organizations, and we randomly assigned each participant to one of the three conditions. The software settings were set to not collect or store the participants' IP-addresses or other private information.

**Results.** One of the purposes of this experiment was to study whether ingratiation is a more effective influence tactic than exchange in achieving the work outcomes. Hence hypothesis 3 suggested that the participants in the ingratiation condition would be more inclined than participants in the exchange condition to a) provide a competence assessment, b) give job promotion, and c) give salary increase. Second, we wanted to replicate the design from experiment 1 to study whether ingratiation and exchange were more effective than the control condition in achieving the work outcomes. Hence hypothesis 4 suggested that the participants in the ingratiation and exchange condition would be more inclined to a) provide positive competence assessment, b) job promotion, and c) salary increase than participants in the control condition. Lastly, in this experiment we studied whether there is a gender difference for ingratiation and exchange. Hence, in hypothesis 5 we suggested that there is a gender difference in the inclination to

a) provide a positive competence assessment, b) give job promotion, and c) give salary increase when the single influence tactics ingratiation and exchange are applied.

When examining the one-way ANOVA, the descriptive statistics illustrated that the ingratiation condition had higher mean scores than the exchange condition for competent and promotion. We wanted to emphasize that, also in this experiment, competent had higher means than both promotion and salary. See table 2 for descriptive statistics and figure 5 for the means and standard deviations for both conditions below.

Table 2

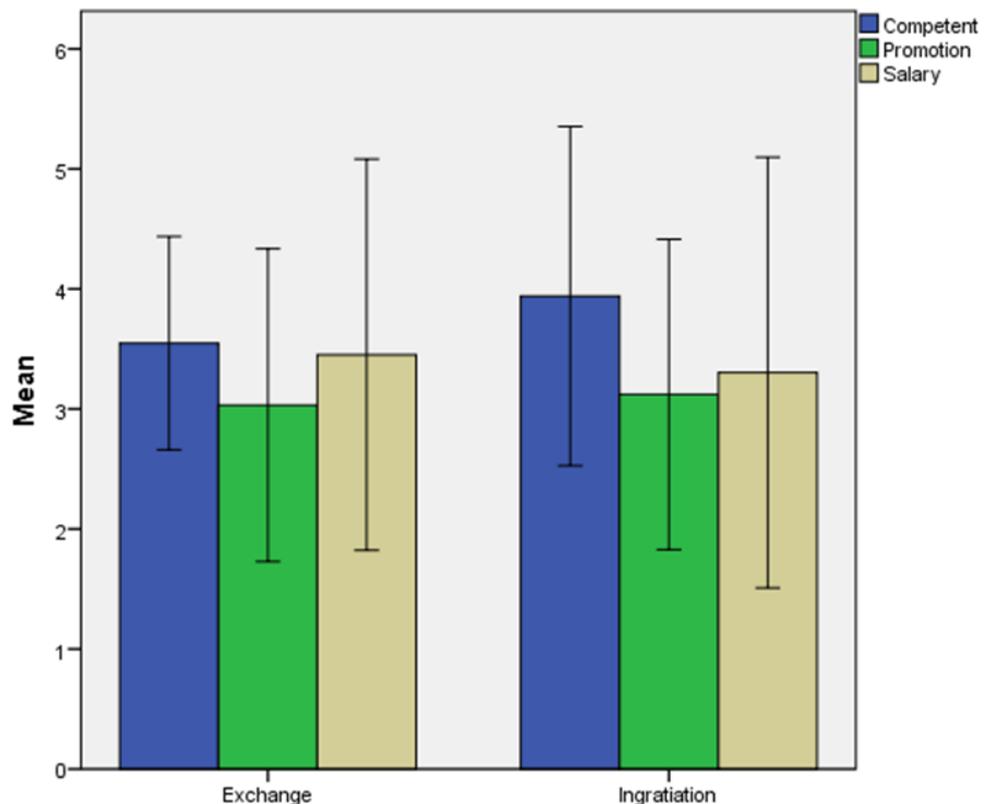
*Descriptive statistics*

Condition	Competent	Promotion	Salary
Ingratiation	3.94 / 1.41	3.12 / 1.29	3.30 / 1.79
Exchange	3.55 / 0.88	3.03 / 1.30	3.45 / 1.63
Control	5.84 / 0.95	5.69 / 0.85	4.75 / 1.27

Note. The results are displayed as follows; *M / SD*

Figure 5

*Means and standard deviations for exchange and ingratiation*



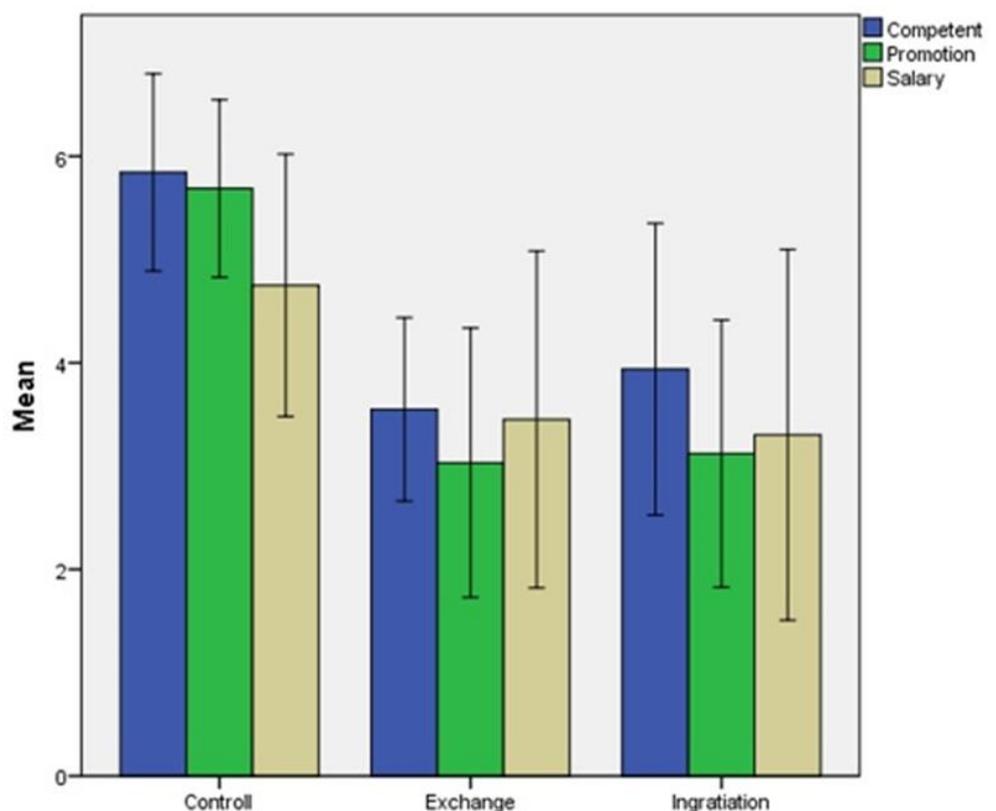
The one-way ANOVA indicated that the mean scores for the two influence tactics were not significantly different from each other. Because of the insignificant findings, we did not run a Post-Hoc Tukey analysis. Hence, we have no support for hypothesis 3a), 3b) or 3c).

As previously discussed, we found the results regarding the control condition in experiment 1 to be quite surprising. In order to further examine and before drawing any final conclusions, we were curious about whether control was neutral or why we were unable to create a condition where no influence tactic was applied. Hence control and the influence tactics of ingratiation and exchange were tested in three separate conditions. In hypothesis 4, we suggested that the participants in the ingratiation and exchange condition were more inclined to a) provide positive competence assessment, b) job promotion, and c) salary increase than the participants in the control condition.

The mean scores of the control condition are seen in table 2 on the previous page. Furthermore, figure 6 illustrates means and standard deviations for all three conditions below.

Figure 6

*Means and standard deviations for control, exchange, and ingratiation*



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The one-way ANOVA revealed that the means for control were significantly different from ingratiation ( $p = .000$ ) and exchange ( $p = .000$ ). Furthermore, the Post-Hoc Tukey analysis showed that the means for control were significantly different from the mean scores for ingratiation on competent ( $p = .000$ ), promotion ( $p = .000$ ), and salary ( $p = .001$ ). Control was also significantly different from the mean scores for exchange on competent ( $p = .000$ ), promotion ( $p = .000$ ), and salary ( $p = .004$ ). These results extended the findings in experiment 1: that control generated significantly higher mean scores than any of the influence tactics. However, hypotheses 4a), 4b) nor 4c) were not supported.

In order to investigate age as a potential moderator, we conducted a two-way ANOVA. However, we found no significant interaction effect for age on competent, promotion, or salary. Further, as there were no significant main effects for age on competent, promotion, or salary, we could not perform a Post-Hoc Tukey analysis. Hence, there was no moderating effect of age for the relationship between influence tactics and work outcomes in this experiment.

Further, we investigated whether gender acts as a moderator for the relationship between ingratiation and exchange on the three work outcomes. We conducted a two-way ANOVA. The analysis revealed that the moderator effect for gender on salary is not significant. However, we found significant interaction effects between gender and competent ( $p = .023$ ) as well as for gender and promotion ( $p = .002$ ). This implied that there are significant differences between males and females on competent and promotion: males give higher ratings on exchange, whereas females give higher ratings on ingratiation. See figure 7 and 8 for mean plots of the two work outcomes, competent and promotion, below.

Figure 7

*Means plot for gender on competent for experiment 2*

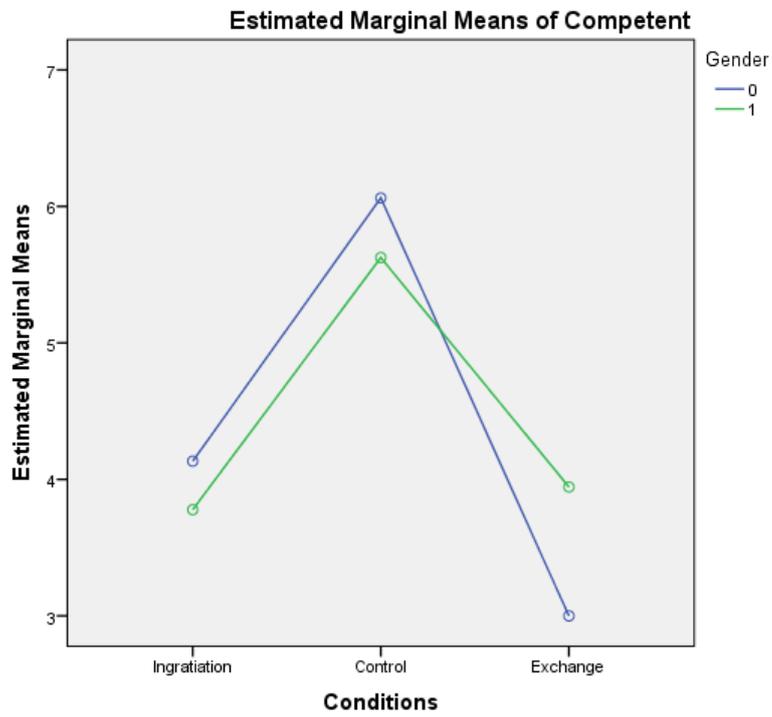
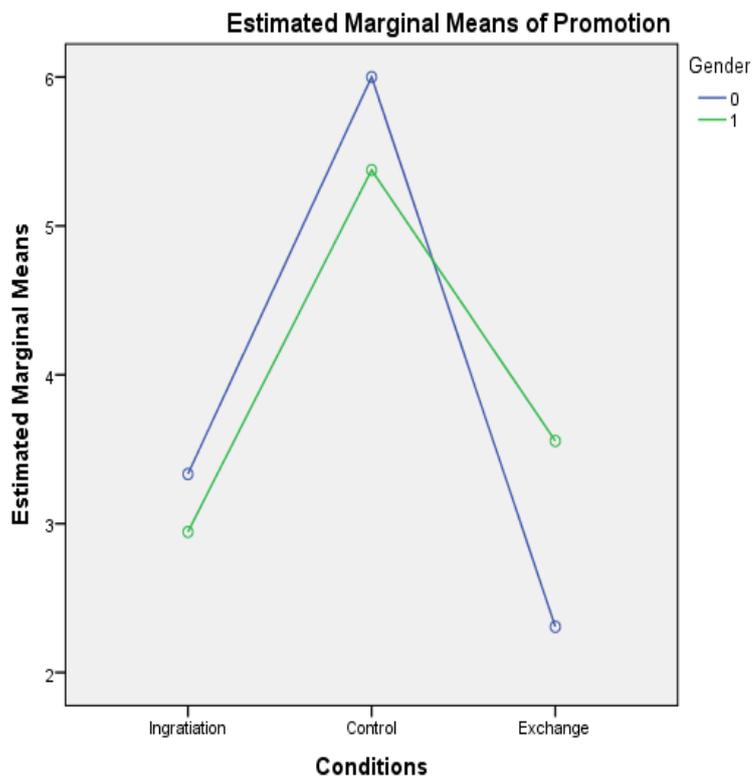


Figure 8

*Means plot for gender on promotion for experiment 2*



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In summation, we found partial support for hypothesis 5, and more specifically for 5a) and 5b), as there were significant differences between males and females when providing competence assessment and considering job promotion. However, we could not draw any conclusion as to whether this result was due to the participants' preference for their own gender, or was related to favoring of certain influence tactics applied by one gender.

### **Experiment 3**

One of the purposes of this experiment was to study combinations of influence tactics in order to find the combination that is the most effective in achieving the work outcomes. As in experiment 2, we studied whether the moderating effect of gender when influence tactics, now in combinations, were considered for work outcomes. This was the second purpose of this experiment.

Higgins et al. (2003) found no studies examining the effects of influence tactics combinations on work outcomes. This highlights a possible gap in the literature we found important to investigate. We have claimed that employees' use of influence tactics in influence attempts are most likely done in combination rather than using single influence tactics. Findings by Yukl and Falbe (1990) argued that a combination of one soft and one hard influence tactic is effective, and that assertiveness and rational persuasion is an especially good combination. To support the inclusion of a combination with two soft influence tactics, researchers have argued that, ingratiation in combination with a core influence tactic, such as rational persuasion, could make an effective combination of two soft influence tactics (Higgins et al., 2003; Yukl et al., 2008). Further, previous findings stated that two soft influence tactics, or a combination of one soft and one hard gave better results than any combination of hard influence tactics (Yukl & Falbe, 1990). Falbe & Yukl (1992) found that rational persuasion in combination with another soft influence tactic was more effective than using rational persuasion or another single soft influence tactic. Further, they (1992) stated that it is likely that the combination of two soft influence tactics is more effective than a combination of a hard and soft influence tactic, or combining two hard influence tactics. According to van Knippenberg and Steensma (2003), the general preference for soft influence tactics in lieu of hard influence tactics might be explained by the distinct burden the use of these two categories might put on the relationship

between the influence agent and the target. Hard influence tactics are generally perceived as less friendly and socially desirable than the softer influence tactics which give the target latitude to act. Further, hard influence tactics might be experienced as unpleasant by the target (van Knippenberg & Steensma, 2003). Therefore, the use of hard influence tactics is more likely to put a strain on the relationship between the agent and the target.

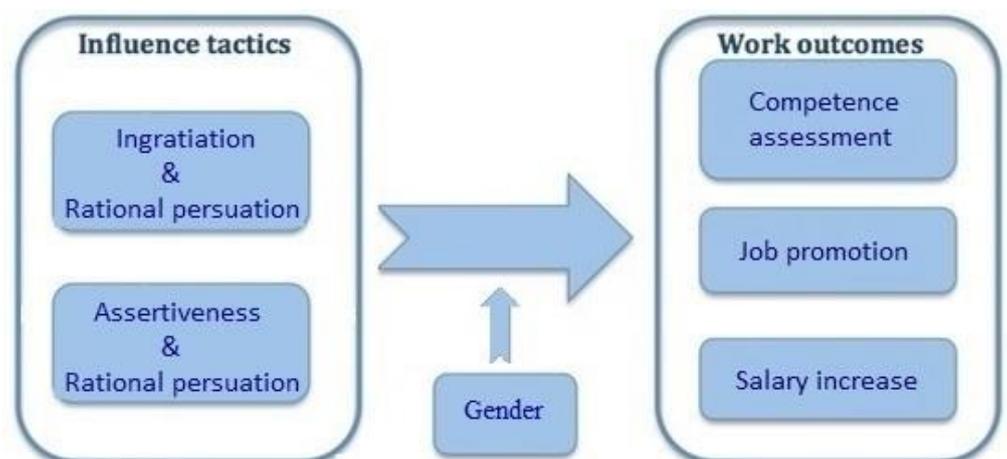
As the combination of rational persuasion & ingratiation represent two soft influence tactics, whereas the combination of rational persuasion & assertiveness contains a mixture of the two categories, we argued that a combination of these two soft influence tactics in an influence attempt would yield better results than the assertiveness & rational persuasion condition. The fact that rational persuasion is the most used influence tactic (Yukl & Falbe, 1990), and ingratiation is perceived as the most effective influence tactic on work outcomes (Higgins et al., 2003), might support this notion. Therefore, we hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 6: Participants in the condition with two soft influence tactics will be more inclined to a) provide a positive competence assessment, b) give job promotion, and c) give salary increase than participants in the hard and soft influence tactic condition.*

See figure 9 for the conceptual model of experiment 3 below.

Figure 9

*Conceptual model of experiment 3*



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As previously mentioned, previous research claimed that men and women apply different influence tactics (e.g., Carli, 2001; Carothers & Allen, 1999). Hence, we hypothesized that:

*Hypothesis 7: When the combinations ingratiation & rational persuasion and assertiveness & rational persuasion are applied, gender acts as a moderator in the inclination to a) provide a positive competence assessment, b) give job promotion, and c) give salary increase.*

### **Method.**

#### ***Participants.***

The sample was a convenience sample (Black, 2009) consisting of Norwegian speaking students, employees from three different Norwegian organizations and people from our network. The recruitment of participants was divided in three stages; the student sample were verbally instructed and recruited during a one-day period at the campus at BI Norwegian Business School in Oslo. Further, the three organizations received an email with the electronic vignette. Lastly, we contacted participants from our network through Facebook. A between-subject design was used since the participants were randomly assigned to one treatment condition (Pany & Reckers, 1987)—either one of the two experimental groups. A total of 40 students, 35 employees, and 111 connections on Facebook were asked if they would like to participate in a short experiment. Of the 186 people asked, 110 agreed to participate and this gave a sample of 40 students, 22 employees, and 48 Facebook participants, which made up a response rate of 59%. The conditions had respectively 56 and 54 participants, where 58 participants were males (53%) and 52 were females (47%). The age ranged from 20 to 69 years, where zero participants were younger than 20 years old, 72 participants were in their 20s, 24 participants were in their 30s, 8 participants were in their 40s, 1 participant was in his/her 50s, and 3 participants were in their 60s. As in the previous experiments, the participants were instructed to read through a text before answering five questions, pertaining to the vignettes. Information was provided that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions and that all responses would remain confidential.

***Measures.***

As in experiment 2, the three dependent variables were: competence assessment, job promotion, and salary increase, and the two control variables, age and gender, were included. The dependent variables were coded as competent, promotion and salary, respectively. Further, we dummy-coded the two control variables as following: For gender, 0 = female and 1 = male. For the age variable; - 20 = 1; 21-29 = 2; 30-39 = 3; 40-49 = 4; 50-59 = 5; 60-69 = 6, and 70 - = 7.

As in the previous experiment, the vignettes contained five questions, where each of the dependent variables were represented by the three first questions, and the last two questions in the vignettes represented the independent variables. All measures were rated on a seven-point Likert scale. For the dependent variables, the seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (e.g., very incompetent) to 7 (e.g., very competent) was used and the measures of the independent variables, ranged from 1 (e.g., less than 20 years) to 7 (e.g., more than 70 years). The measures of the two combinations of influence tactics, ingratiation & rational persuasion and assertiveness & rational persuasion, were inspired by the IBQ-G by Yukl et al. (2008) and consisted of the same sentences used in experiment 1 and 2 describing the employee Robert. Each vignette equally contained extracts from both influence tactics in order to properly measure the impact of the two combinations of influence tactics in this experiment.

***Experiment procedure and text creation.***

We created two new vignettes based on the experiment texts from experiment 1 and experiment 2. The introduction text is the same as the one applied in the vignettes in experiment 2. Each vignette included approximately half of the previously used texts of each single influence tactic (appendix 8a and 9a). The vignette was handed out to the participants either by paper, through email, or Facebook. In order to avoid a potential language problem, considering that Norwegian is the participants' native language, the vignettes were handed out to the participants in Norwegian (appendix 8b and 9b). Extracts of the vignettes for each of the conditions are seen below.

Extract of the ingratiation & rational persuasion vignette:

*As you know, I have a master's degree in finance from a well-known business school and have shown good results during my time in the company. ... As a manager you have always seen your subordinates and their needs. I am thankful for everything I have learned from you, and for being so fortunate to work with you (Appendix 8a)*

Extract of the assertiveness & rational persuasion vignette:

*As you know, I have a master's degree in finance from a well-known business school and have shown good results during my time in the company. ... my background and expertise can be useful tools in order to be effective and cost efficient in different settings. It would not have been unnatural for me to focus on my own career instead of continuing in the position I currently have, and it is not difficult for me to find another job. I deserve to become the Project Manager ... (Appendix 9a)*

Ten copies of each vignette were tested in one pilot study with twenty respondents in total. After the pilot study, comments on the vignette from some of the participants in the pilot confirmed our assumption that the vignette was satisfactory. The response sheet was the same as the one applied in the previous experiment (appendix 10a and 10b).

The same three small-medium sized Norwegian based organizations that participated in experiment 2 also agreed to participate in this experiment with other organizational members participating. In collaboration with the contact person in each organization, an email with general information and a request to help us with our study was sent to all the organizational participants prior to the email containing the vignette. The vignettes were made electronically by the software provided by SurveyMonkey. We copied the format from the paper-based vignette into the software. After smaller adjustments, the link to the online vignette was converted into a URL and attached to the email which was sent to the

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participants in agreement with the organizations. All email addresses were provided by the organizations, and we randomly assigned each participant to one of the two conditions. The software was set to not collect or store the participants' IP-addresses or other private information.

In order to conduct data collection through Facebook, a Facebook page named "Thomas and Synne's Master Thesis" was created. We randomly picked participants from our network with a "letter dice" on the internet. The dice randomly selected a letter between A and Z. If, for example, the dice selected the letter "E", connections with "E" as the first letter in their first name (e.g., Eirin, Erik, and Espen) were invited. We sent a short personal greeting with an invitation to the Facebook page and request to participate in the data collection for this study. In order to minimize any bias, potential participants who had any information about the theme or topic of the study were not invited to participate. One example is, if Erik had talked to any of us about the study, he would have been excluded. SurveyMonkey settings were set to not collect or store the participants' IP-addresses or other private information. In addition, all participants were informed that the Facebook page would be closed after the data collection. Further, it was deleted before submission of this study.

**Results.** One of the purposes with experiment 3 was to study combinations of influence tactics in order to find the combination that is the most effective in achieving the three work outcomes.

For this experiment we made hypothesis 6, suggesting that participants in the condition with two soft influence tactics, namely ingratiation and rational persuasion, would be more inclined to provide a) positive competence assessment, b) job promotion, and c) salary increase than participants in the hard and soft influence tactic condition, containing assertiveness and rational persuasion.

The descriptive statistics from the one-way ANOVA reported that the mean scores of ingratiation & rational persuasion were higher than the mean scores of assertiveness & rational persuasion. But the one-way ANOVA revealed that the means for the two combinations of influence tactics were not significantly different from one another. Because of the insignificant findings, we were unable

to run a Post-Hoc Tukey analysis. This implied that hypotheses 6a), 6b), and 6c) were not supported.

In the absence of significant findings, we argued that none of the combinations are better than the other when aiming for the work outcomes. We emphasized that both conditions have higher mean scores on competent than on promotion and salary. See table 3 for descriptive statistics and figure 10 for means and standard deviations for the two conditions below.

Table 3

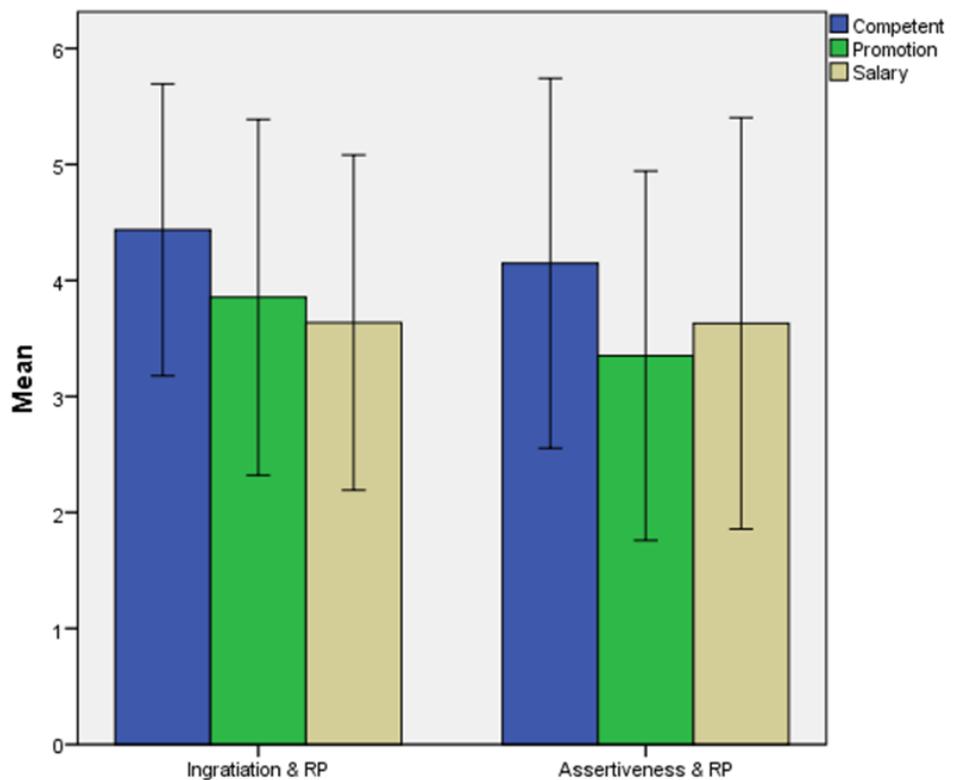
*Descriptive statistics*

Condition	Competent	Promotion	Salary
Ingratiation & rational persuasion	4.46 / 1.26	3.88 / 1.52	3.66 / 1.44
Assertiveness & rational persuasion	3.94 / 1.41	3.12 / 1.29	3.30 / 1.79

Note. The results are displayed as follows; *M / SD*

Figure 10

*Means and standard deviations for ingratiation & rational persuasion, and assertiveness & rational persuasion*



The second purpose with this experiment was to investigate gender as a moderator for the combinations of influence tactics on the three work outcomes. We

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conducted a two-way ANOVA, and the analysis revealed that there was no significant moderator effect for gender. However, the main effects for gender on competent ( $p = .016$ ) and salary ( $p = .038$ ) were significant, whereas the main effect for gender on promotion was not significant. Even though there were significant difference between men and women when considering competence assessment and salary increase, gender did not moderate the relationship between the combinations of influence tactics and the work outcomes. Concluding, hypotheses 7a), 7b) and 7c) were not supported.

To investigate age as a potential moderator, we conducted a two-way ANOVA analysis and found no significant interaction effect or main effects for age on competent, promotion, or salary.

On the following page, we have summarized the results for all three experiments.

**Summary Table of Hypotheses and Results**

Table 4

*Hypothesis and results*

<b>Experiment</b>	<b>Hypotheses</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>1:</b> Participants in the rational persuasion condition will be more inclined to a), b), c) than the participants in the assertiveness condition:	
	a) provide a positive competence assessment	P < 0.01
	b) give job promotion	P < 0.01
	c) give salary increase	P < 0.01
	<b>2:</b> Participants in the rational persuasion condition and the assertiveness condition will be more inclined to a), b), c) than the participants in the control condition:	
	a) provide a positive competence assessment	P < 0.01
<b>2</b>	<b>3:</b> Participants in the ingratiation condition will be more inclined to a), b), c) than the participants in the exchange condition:	
	a) provide a positive competence assessment	n. s
	b) give job promotion	n. s
	c) give salary increase	n. s
	<b>4:</b> Participants in the ingratiation and exchange condition will be more inclined to a), b), c) than participants in the control condition:	
	a) provide a positive competence assessment	n. s
	b) give job promotion	n. s
	c) give salary increase	n. s
	<b>5:</b> When the influence tactics ingratiation and exchange are applied, gender acts as a moderator in the inclination to a), b), c)	
	a) provide a positive competence assessment	P < 0.05
b) give job promotion	P < 0.05	
<b>3</b>	<b>6:</b> Participants in the condition with two soft influence tactics will be more inclined to a), b), c) than participants in the hard and soft influence tactic condition.	
	a) provide a positive competence assessment	n. s
	b) give job promotion	n. s
	c) give salary increase	n. s
	<b>7:</b> When the combinations ingratiation & rational persuasion and assertiveness & rational persuasion are applied, gender acts as a moderator in the inclination to a), b), c)	
	a) provide a positive competence assessment	n. s
	b) give job promotion	n. s
c) give salary increase	n. s	

## **Discussion**

Through three experiments we intended to replicate previous research stating the effectiveness of the two single influence tactics rational persuasion and ingratiation. Additionally, the influence tactic of assertiveness was included because previous research on assertiveness showed mixed results for its effectiveness on work outcomes. Exchange, for which there exists limited research on work outcomes, was also examined. Furthermore, by combining two soft influence tactics and a hard and a soft influence tactic, respectively, we intended to fill another gap in the literature. Moreover, we have studied whether there is a moderating effect of gender in the inclination to provide a positive competence assessment, job promotion, and salary increase offer when single as well as combinations of influence tactics are applied. Although we did not find as much support for our hypotheses, we did get a significant finding for the effectiveness of rational persuasion, which was in line with previous research. Additionally, we found partial support for an existing moderating effect for gender in the influence attempts. In the following section, we would first like to discuss the findings for each of the hypotheses. Further, based on the experiment results, we want to address factors other than the influence tactics themselves which potentially affected the work outcomes.

### **Influence Tactics and Work Outcomes**

In the first experiment, the studied influence tactics were assertiveness and rational persuasion, and the results indicated that the latter tactic achieved higher mean scores than the former. A possible explanation is that the research finding by Yukl and Tracey (1992), which stated that rational persuasion is the most effective tactic and that pressure, which is closely related to assertiveness, is among the least effective influence tactics. They (1992) also found that rational persuasion is most used in an upward direction and that pressure is most used in a downward direction. Hence, the direction of influence might have affected our results.

Another reason the participants in the rational persuasion condition had higher mean scores on the work outcomes than the participants in the assertiveness condition could be that rational persuasion is the most used influence tactic (Yukl & Falbe, 1990), and could therefore be seen as an acceptable way of presenting

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one's points of view. If this is the case, assertive employees might be seen as less competent if they need to use a forceful manner in order to get what they want, rather than relying on objective facts and rational arguments. Further, assertive behavior might be perceived as inappropriate and assertive employees might also be seen as less likeable than those who use logical arguments. Since it is a hard influence tactic, assertiveness can be perceived as coercive and controlling from the target's point of view (van Knippenberg & Steensma, 2003). This influence tactic might be seen as aggressive, and hence give a negative impression of the influencer. Further, assertive people might be seen as less competent and their behavior might be viewed as undesirable in an organizational setting. We believe that rational arguments and soft influence tactics are considered to be more valuable in an organizational context. Here, assertiveness might represent an attitude one might not want to encourage in one's organization. Even though one might consider someone to be both competent and skillful, it does not automatically mean that one would like to reward this behavior with either rating high scores on competence assessment, providing a job promotion offer, or a salary increase offer. By taking the perspective of a supervisor, one might feel that rewarding assertive behavior sends a negative signal to the other employees, and thereby allows a potential rougher culture to emerge in the organization.

Higgins et al. (2003) found support for the notion that rational behavior is more appropriate than an assertive way of behaving. More specifically, they found that rational persuasion had a positive effect on all three work outcomes, while assertiveness had a positive effect on salary increase offer and job promotion offer, but not for performance assessments. However, they stated that one possible explanation for the negative effect from assertiveness on performance assessments is that assertive people are more aggressive in seeking out or asking for pay raises and promotions than positive performance assessments (Higgins et al., 2003). This could influence their results as they have conducted a meta-analytic correlational study. However, in this study we have manipulated the influence tactics and asked the participants specifically to make an assessment of all three outcomes. To sum up, our findings for hypothesis 1 were in accordance with previous studies (Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl & Tracey, 1992), which have stated that rational persuasion is the most effective influence tactic across all the work outcomes we investigated.

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Regarding hypothesis 2, we included a control condition and argued that the influence tactics, namely rational persuasion and assertiveness, would achieve higher means scores than this neutral condition. As we know, the results gave us opposite findings. The study by Proost et al.'s (2010) suggested that it is better to use any type of impression management tactics than to use no tactic at all. Hence, the results in our study for the control condition show contradictory results. We have two possible explanations for these findings. First, it could be that the manipulation had the desired consequence; that is, we succeeded in manipulating a neutral condition. If so, these results showed that not using influence tactics would be more effective than using the influence tactics rational persuasion or assertiveness. Second, and possibly more likely, it could be that we did not succeed in manipulating a neutral condition, but that we have increased the credibility of the source of influence. In fact, research has claimed that one of the most important characteristic of the influence agent is communicator credibility (Lai, 2005). We will discuss this further below.

Hypothesis 3 argued that ingratiation is a more effective influence tactic than exchange. The mean scores for both influence tactics were rather low and there was no significant difference between the two influence tactics. Considering the documented strong positive relationship between ingratiation and work outcomes reported by Higgins et al. (2003), we found it rather surprising that the ingratiation results were so small and did not significantly result in higher mean scores compared to exchange. As ingratiation is perceived as one of the most effective influence tactic on work outcomes (Higgins et al., 2003), we hoped to get results in line with this notion. We questioned whether praise and flattery works best through other media than a written one, and opened up for the possibility that the ingratiatory statements in the letter by Robert were too evident and created some sort of disgust, disfavor, and suspiciousness to the raters. The sentence "When I was told it was you who were to select the new Project Manager I knew it was the most qualified of us to be given that task" might for example create a thought of unrealism and negative perceptions of Robert. According to Gordon (1996), influence attempts using ingratiation targeted lateral or downwards were more successful than upward influence attempts. As previously mentioned, direction might be another factor explaining the results.

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Regarding the exchange results, we believed that the reason for the weak results might be due to the direction of the influence attempt. Previous research (e.g., Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl & Tracey, 1992) has argued for its use in downward and lateral influence attempts in preference of upward attempts. Previous research has found that exchange is moderately effective (Falbe & Yukl, 1992; Yukl & Tracey, 1992). As our findings were even less effective than at a moderate level, we claimed that its lack of success could be due to the context of the experiment, as it became very clear that Robert would never be able to return the favor in any way to the respondent. Subsequently, this might have resulted in the low mean rating of Robert.

The findings for hypothesis 4 stated that the means for control were significantly higher than the mean scores for ingratiation and exchange on all three work outcomes. Hence, the results were in line with the results found for the second hypothesis, and by this extended the findings in experiment 1. We addressed the same possible explanations for these results as we did in the discussion for hypothesis 2, namely that we either succeeded in manipulating a neutral condition, or that we failed in this mission, and instead increased the source credibility of the influence attempt (O'Keefe, 2002). We have acknowledged the need for a more thorough reflection of these findings and their possible implications. This topic will be addressed in the next discussion section.

In hypothesis 5 we suggested that there would be a moderating effect for gender in the inclination to provide a positive competence assessment, and give job promotion and salary increase when ingratiation and exchange are applied. We found partial support for hypothesis 5 as there was a significant difference between men and women when considering competence and job promotion. Further, our results indicated that men give higher ratings on exchange than women, whereas women give higher ratings on ingratiation than men. Our findings were in line with Kipnis and Schmidt's (1988) findings which claimed that men who applied ingratiation behavior in an upward influence attempt receive poorer performance evaluations than women. Hence, a male employee who uses exchange towards his male supervisor has a greater possibility of achieving a positive competence assessment and job promotion than a male employee who uses ingratiation towards his supervisor. A possible explanation for

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the negative effect for exchange on positive competence assessment and promotion for women might be the nature of exchange: offering incentives or exchange of favors might be seen as political behavior. As previous research has claimed, women are less accepting of political behavior than males, and therefore give significantly lower ratings on exchange than men (Pettigrew, Pfeffer, Frost & Hayes, as cited in Drory & Beaty, 1991).

In order to extend the limited literature on the effects of influence tactics combinations on work outcomes, we included two combinations of influence tactics in hypothesis 6. Although the mean scores for the condition with two soft influence tactics was higher than the hard and soft influence tactic condition on all the three work outcomes, the difference was not significant. Hence, we could not draw any conclusions, but we would like to discuss these findings based on the assumption that the soft-soft combination is more effective than the soft-hard combination. This argument is supported by Higgins et al.'s (2003) statement that the combination of rational persuasion with ingratiation would provide a better chance of obtaining a performance assessment, job promotion, and salary increase. Further, Falbe and Yukl's (1992) findings indicated that rational persuasion is more effective in combination with ingratiation than when used individually. If we compare the means from rational persuasion in experiment 1 (i.e., single use of rational persuasion) with the means from experiment 3 (i.e., combination of rational persuasion and ingratiation), we see the opposite findings than what Falbe and Yukl (1992) reported. Hence, the mean scores of the single use of rational persuasion were higher than the combination with both another soft influence tactic, as well as together with a hard influence tactic. This, in accordance with previous research, argued that a soft-hard combination was no better than a single soft influence tactic (Falbe & Yukl, 1992; Yukl & Falbe, 1990). We argued that the reason the soft-hard combination achieved lower mean scores might be due to the more inappropriate nature of assertiveness. And as stated by Thacker and Wayne (1995), "evidence suggests that use of assertiveness tactics does not place the subordinate in a favorable light" (p. 741).

Hypothesis 7 argued that when the combinations ingratiation & rational persuasion and assertiveness & rational persuasion were applied, gender served as a moderator in the inclination to provide a positive competence assessment, give

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job promotion, and give salary increase. The results revealed that there was no significant moderating effect for gender on none of the work outcomes for any of the combinations of influence tactics. Although we did not find support for Hypothesis 7, we wanted to reflect further upon the findings for gender in a wider discussion about explanatory factors affecting the relationship between genders and influence tactics in the following section.

As we have discussed, different influence tactics are more effective than others in achieving positive work outcomes, either as a single influence tactic or in combinations with other influence tactics. Further, we have mixed results regarding the moderator effects of gender in the relationship between single and combinations of influence tactics and work outcomes. However, the discussion has also addressed the possibility that other factors could affect the perception of and use of influence tactics, beyond the nature and properties of the influence tactics themselves. Hence, in the following section, we will address important factors that might affect the work outcomes studied in this study.

### **Influential Factors**

In the subsequent section we have reflected upon individual attributes that might determine the effectiveness of influence tactics on work outcomes. More specifically, we have claimed that modes of thinking might influence the evaluation of and hence the responses to various influence tactics. Further, we have discussed the importance of a trustworthy presentation of one's agenda as it seemed to benefit Robert when another source presented him. Finally, we have considered the role of gender in influence attempts, as there were significant differences between males and females when competence assessment and promotion offers were considered.

*The state of mind.* As previously mentioned, different influence tactics might be more effective in certain job situations than others. In the following discussion we wanted to apply a heuristic theory to reason this statement. Kahneman (2003) stated that the evaluation of a stimulus as good or bad was an important natural assessment and that people adopted preferences and attitudes for the primordial evaluative system which Kahneman included in System 1. In the process where influence tactics were being used and the receiver was unaware of the ongoing influence attempt, the natural assessment of the attempt might depend

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on the receivers' unconscious evaluation of the stimulus. In this situation the natural assessment by System 1 might lead to a stimulus response regardless of the receivers' awareness or lack of awareness of the influence attempt. Hence, the unconscious evaluation by System 1 might determine the effectiveness of the different influence tactics and not the situation alone.

The unconscious state of mind can be defined as mental processes that are inaccessible to consciousness but that influence judgments, feelings, or behavior (Wilson, 2002). Although some of the participants in our experiments might have been unconsciously influenced to interpret, evaluate, and select their answer alternative, the mental process for others might have been completely different. One of the characteristics by System 2 is the extent of deliberate checking and searching in the memory for all relevant information one needs to make a decision (Kahneman, 2011). The mobilization of System 2 happened when a question arose to which System 1 did not respond (Kahneman, 2011). In our three experiments we tested the different influence tactics for several reasons. The three questions our participants were asked to consider were perhaps not natural, as some effort might be needed in order to accomplish the task. This might involve cautious choices between options, and hence, System 2 would come into play.

In line with Cleveland and Murphy's (1992) argument about the performance assessments' influence on organizational decisions concerning promotions and pay raise, we questioned whether the participants' minds noticed a relation between the three work outcomes, and whether their answer in the first question regarding competence assessment influenced how they rated Robert in the two following questions. If this was the case, we argued that System 2 would come into play and operate the participant's decision-making process for the three work outcomes.

In the context of work outcomes, rational persuasion was seen as one of the most-studied influence tactics, and contrarily, exchange was one of the least-studied influence tactics in a work outcome setting (Higgins et al., 2003). We question whether this might have reflected the participants' application of influence tactics in their everyday life. Moreover, in various work situations people might be more used to rational arguments compared to the offer of incentives or exchange of

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favors. We argued that the frequency of exposure and prior use of the different influence tactics might have determined the level of interaction between the participants' System 1 and System 2. Hence prior experience with the influence tactic involved might have affected the two modes of thinking. For some participants the exposure to the exchange vignette in experiment 2 might have activated a search in memory for the information needed if the behavior of assessing the information was unnatural. Other participants might be more exposed and experienced with rational arguments, so the rational persuasion vignette in experiment 1 might be seen as more natural and result in a more routine and automatic registration by the individuals' System 1. In this brief example we have seen how the two modes of thinking might have influenced how the participants rate the three questions in the vignette, and at the same time we addressed the question regarding the importance of using the right influence tactic in obtaining the work outcomes.

*Is there such a thing as neutral influence?* One of the main contributions to this paper was the inclusion of a control condition, where a neutral vignette was made in order to make the participants rate Robert. To the best of our knowledge, no reported findings exist for this condition in the field of influence tactics. This either supported the statement of a great contribution to the field, or simply stressed the question of whether any messages that are neutral or free from use of influence tactics really exist.

We have conducted an experimental study with the aim of suggesting causal relationships by examining various influence tactics' effects on work outcomes. Additionally, we have attempted to reduce the plausibility of other explanations for these effects (Shadish, Cook & Campbell, 2002). Regarding the neutral condition, we could not reject all other explanatory factors, and argued that the internal validity for the control condition was threatened (Lai, 2004). We do not believe we have succeeded in manipulating a neutral condition, or ruled out all alternative explanations (Shadish et al., 2002). Considering the experiments aim of stating the causality between the influence attempt and the rating for the three work outcomes, we stressed that there seems to be an attribute other than a neutral influence that has caused such high ratings for this condition. Nevertheless, this can still give us some interesting insights. One explanation for these results could

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be that the source of the influence attempt has changed from Robert, an agent who had something to gain, to a more credible source who had less to gain, namely a person who obviously knew Robert as an employee, and described him in third person. Tormala and Petty (2004) argued that the source can be deemed credible if he/she was trustworthy or could be seen as an expert. Expertise and trustworthiness are basic dimensions of credibility, because only in combination do they make the argumentation reliable (O'Keefe, 2002). O'Keefe (2002) stated that expertise questioned whether the communicator was in a position to know the truth, whereas trustworthiness was related to whether the communicator likely would tell the truth as he/she saw it. We would like to discuss both these dimensions. Tormala and Petty (2004) stated that source credibility referred to a perceived ability or motivation a source possessed to provide accurate and truthful information. From the influence target's perspective, Lim (2013) defined credibility as an individuals' assessment of whether the information was believable, based on the knowledge, experience, and situation one possessed. Source credibility has been one of the most-studied communication variables in the persuasion literature, and the general finding was that high credibility sources elicited more persuasion than low credibility sources (Nan, 2009; O'Keefe, 2002; Tormala & Petty, 2004). In our experiment, Robert could be seen as a low credibility source because of his aim to get the position. It was likely to assume that when people had an incentive to do so, they were prone to exaggerate when presenting themselves, and hence appeared to be less trustworthy. We stated that the source describing Robert (e.g. his supervisor), on the other hand, did not have such a strong incentive to exaggerate. Regarding Tormala and Petty's (2004) statement about expert influence, we argued that Robert's supervisor could be seen as an expert as the participants might ascribe him/her experience and skills in evaluating his/her subordinates and give valued recommendations for them to proceed in their work. Further, following O'Keefe's (2002) conceptualization of expertise, it is more likely that the message from Robert's supervisor appeared correct than if Robert were to have presented the same information himself. Hence, this increased the message cogency.

Nan (2009) argued that source credibility and source expertise have a similar effect on message elaboration. Regarding source expertise, Nan (2009) stated that when people encountered an untrustworthy source, they would be unsure whether

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the information provided was accurate and thus would engage in greater message scrutiny to ascertain its validity than with trustworthy sources. Further, concerning source credibility, Nan (2009) argued that when being confronted with a trustworthy source, people would be confident that the information provided was accurate and thus would accept the message unthinkingly as valid. Accordingly, Nan (2009) argued that people were likely to engage in more extensive message elaboration to ascertain the validity of the information when examining a source holding low expertise. On the other hand, people would be likely to accept the message as valid without much thinking if a source had high expertise (Nan, 2009). Consequently, the respondents might have applied a way of thinking from System 2 when considering the vignettes and thus rated Robert strictly. Further, the influence attempt made by Robert's manager was accepted through System 1 and ratings were systematically higher.

We argued that some of the respondents might have resisted the influence attempt spontaneously. In line with Tormala and Petty's (2004) statement, we claimed that in "real-world" persuasion contexts, people were not typically encouraged to give an evaluation of work outcomes right after the stimulus was given through the influence attempt. Thus, resistance to comply might have affected the ratings. Following, we argued that evaluation time might have emphasized the difference between the neutral vignette and the influence tactic vignettes even more, and that the thought processes more critically examined the credibility and expert level to a higher extent. Further, we argued that the neutral vignette might have resulted in less resistance to relent to the benefit of Robert. Additionally, we argued that the neutral vignette could remind the respondents of a letter of recommendation or reference, and hence be easier to accept than a text where the ratee also was the author of the message.

It has been demonstrated empirically that influence attempts are not always effective. For instance, Fu et al. (2004) found that cultural values could moderate the perceived effectiveness of influence strategies. It might be that the Norwegian culture could influence the effectiveness of the influence tactics in our experiment. It could be, for instance, that Norway has an egalitarian culture where the use of influence tactics could be perceived as inappropriate. This will be discussed further in the limitations.

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Power is a concept that is related to egalitarianism. Following, another reason for the result and implication in control is based on power theory. Gruenfeld et al. (2008) found that high power individuals objectify social targets. In Gruenfeld et al.'s (2008) paper, they stated that this objectification became less appropriate when high powered individuals overgeneralized their objectification, that is, when they were demanding towards individuals who were not their subordinates. Related to our study, one could assume that Robert was not in a position to demand anything from the participants, and thus, rational persuasion, assertiveness, ingratiation, and exchange seemed inappropriate to some of the participants. Consequently, some participants were less willing to give Robert a positive competence assessment, a job promotion, and salary increase. This could explain why we got higher mean scores for control. Hence, it could be that Robert did not have the social power needed to exercise influence, and that could be the reason the results were stronger in the control condition, where a more powerful person, namely the manager, wrote favorably about Robert.

*The relation between gender and influence tactics.* Our results indicated that there were significant differences between men and women in the second experiment when considering competence and promotion, where men gave highest ratings on exchange, whereas women gave highest ratings on ingratiation.

Barbuto et al. (2006) claimed that there was extensive evidence for the notion that men and women applied different influence tactics. We questioned whether this was due to preferences of influence tactics. Additionally we questioned if this implied that certain influence tactics appealed to men and not women, and vice versa. Furthermore, we argued that these gender preferences might impact one's personal inclinations to apply a tactic instead of another.

According to Smith et al. (2013), gender acted as a key variable for understanding workplace influence. In a literature review, Carli (2001) argued that much research bears evidence of men having greater influence than women. This could be explained by the power differences between the genders and the persistence of traditional stereotypes, Carli (2001) argued. This argument is supported by Mainiero (1986) who argued that men and women were socialized to use different influence tactics, and that this socialization process carried over to the work

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setting. Further, Mainiero (1986) stated that the sex stereotypic perceptions in the workplace were due to early learning experiences. This is what the socialization literature called a strong sex bias (Mainiero, 1986). Further, in their meta-analysis, Smith et al. (2013) argued that both men and women were bound to gender-based norms that prescribed appropriate influence behaviors. They (2013) stated that the appropriate use should result in, among others, personal advancement outcomes such as promotion and salary increase. For example, the research findings by Tepper et al. (1993) stated that men and women were expected to use influence tactics in different ways and argued that a violation of these social expectations might be associated with negative outcomes, such as low performance ratings. It appeared that stereotypes of gender behavior could influence one's perception of agents from both the same and the opposite gender, and hence relevant work outcomes. In line with Tepper et al. (1993), we questioned whether employees who used upward influence tactics consistent with gender stereotypes were more likely to gain acceptance from organizational members who had more power and influence. Could the significant difference between men's and women's ratings for influence attempts where exchange and ingratiation is used and where men rated the influence attempt containing exchange the highest, be explained by coherence between the male stereotype and Robert's behavior? Are men expected to seek influence through exchange when pursuing competence assessment and promotion? Contrarily, one might question why ingratiation is not shown to be a more effective tactic for achieving these work outcomes. Further, we wondered why ingratiation—which previous research reported to be greatly effective in achieving competence assessment, promotion, and salary increase—was highly regarded by women, but not by men in this study. We have argued that this might be due to the expectations of behavior and male stereotypes not being met.

Moreover, Carli (2001) stated that this influence was moderated by, among others, the influence agent's competence, the communication style of the interactants, and the gender bias of the task. We argued that our results for the three work outcomes were due to the situation at hand and implicated expectations on how a male would react in this given situation. Additionally, we have argued that the respondents rated the object according to what was expected of them and what would be an appropriate response to the situation. We have questioned if there were any systematic responses to objects of the same gender versus the opposite

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gender. Drory and Beaty's (1991) findings argued that men were more accepting of political behavior than women. Based on these results, we would like to make a parallel to one of our findings, as male respondents gave significantly higher ratings than females on competence assessment and promotion when exchange was applied. Further, in line with Drory and Beaty (1991), who found that respondents viewed political manipulators of their own sex more favorably than the opposite sex, and thus reacted to organizational events in favor of their own gender, we have questioned if this could explain why female respondents rated the object lower than their male counterparts? Drory & Beaty (1991) further argued that the potential gender solidarity might be far more encompassing than what has been demonstrated in their research. They (1991) claimed that organizational decisions in areas such as promotions, resource allocation, and staffing might be affected by the gender of those directly involved in such decisions. This might implicate that the gender representation of both influence target and object could influence how the outcome in situations where decisions on promotions were to be made turns out. Is an individual variable such as gender crucial for the outcome one seeks?

In the above sections we have discussed three important factors that guided the effectiveness of influence tactics on work outcomes. First, regarding the state of mind, System 1 might have influenced the participants depending on the receivers' unconscious evaluation or the conscious evaluation of the stimulus by System 2. Further, our results indicated the importance of gender in influence attempts, as there were significant differences between men and women when considering competence assessment and a promotion offer. Hence, gender might be crucial for determining the influence tactic effectiveness on the work outcomes, and not only the nature and properties of the influence tactics themselves. Concerning the inclusion of the control condition, we do not think we have succeeded in creating a neutral condition. However, we have stated that we rediscovered the importance of source credibility as it seemed to come into play when perceiving and evaluating influence tactics.

### **Limitations**

Our experiments had some possible limitations that need to be addressed. First, we did not control for the individual difference concerning work experience

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(Thacker & Wayne, 1995). This could question the internal validity of the experiments (Lai, 2004). Second, the sampling of the respondents was not random as we applied a convenience sample of students at the BI Norwegian Business School, three Norwegian organizations, as well as our network on Facebook. We argued that students in general, and employees with a formal degree from the organization sample were more used to applying logic and facts in their everyday life than what was common for the Norwegian population as a whole. According to Cable and Judge (2003) individuals who use logic more, tend to use rational persuasion more often. This might also explain the high mean scores the influence tactic rational persuasion has been given in this study, with its emphasis on objective facts and rational arguments. However, we believe that everybody, not only students, appreciate rational arguments and that this phenomenon might be generalizable to other samples.

Another related possible limitation is that the participants were all Norwegians, or at least read and understood the language well. Cross-cultural studies have indicated that different influence tactics might be more beneficial in some cultures than in others. In the study by Fu et al. (2004) the researchers found that rational persuasion was seen as consistent with Americans' preference for using reasoning when influencing people. It could be that the same preference can be found in the Norwegian culture, and that other influence tactics (e.g., exchange) could be regarded as inappropriate.

Third, we questioned whether it was possible to influence people through a piece of paper, or if we would have seen stronger results if the influence attempt occurred in a more realistic setting. However, our findings showed mixed results as the manipulation of the three conditions in experiment 1 was successful whereas the manipulation for the conditions in experiment 2 and 3 could not be deemed successful. The result for the first experiment indicated that it was possible to exercise influence through vignettes. In addition, our results were in line with previous findings showing that rational persuasion was more effective than assertiveness (Higgins et al., 2003).

We would like to stress that the three work outcomes we studied have various properties and relationships with the influence tactics (Higgins et al., 2003).

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Promotions and salaries often depended on factors that the subordinate had limited control over, such as available resources of vacant positions in the company (Higgins et al., 2003). Gender is an example of such an external factor for salary increase (Gerhart & Rynes, 1991). Measures of performance assessment, on the other hand, often depended more on the personal characteristics and behavior of the influencer (Higgins et al., 2003). Hence, even though one applied the right influence tactic, the desired outcome might not always be the result. However, we have argued that influence tactics were effective in the pursuit of a positive competence assessment, as our findings reported that this work outcome achieved higher mean scores than both job promotion and salary increase across all experiments.

We based the vignette content on influence tactics suggested in the IBQ-G by Yukl et al. (2008), and got inspiration from the items for each of the influence tactics to write out the vignettes. Despite this foundation, the texts have been created out of our own minds and reason. Hence, this implies a possible threat to content validity (Lai, 2004). However, we argue that we have been able to measure the respective concepts, or influence tactics, in an appropriate way. Additionally, we claim that the vignettes for the combinations represented an equal amount of the two respective influence texts so that the content validity is satisfactory also for these conditions.

We did not find support for such a strong moderating effect, and following, great gender difference as we had envisioned. We found support for this notion for the influence tactics ingratiation and exchange, but not for the combinations ingratiation & rational persuasion nor for assertiveness & rational persuasion. The results for ingratiation and exchange reported a significant difference among the genders when competence assessment and job promotion were considered, but not for salary increase. According to Waldron (1999), research that has studied the effects of gender differences on upward influence tactic choice during the past 25 years has generally reported small or no effects of gender of both target and agent. This might explain the modest results. In line with the previous argument, we only studied the use of influence tactics with a male object. If we had collected data by using the same vignettes with a female object, we would have been able to map

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the tendencies for gender preference in both tactic use and for the rater to a wider extent.

As Higgins et al. (2003) pointed out, there were several variables that potentially could affect the relationship between the influence tactics and work outcomes, and hence affect the overall validity estimates. In this study we acknowledged that the research environment and the specific work outcome of interest might take this role. The environment where the study was conducted, which is a quasi-experimental approach conducted in the field with an isolated effect in the vignette, likely affected the strength of the relationships between influence tactics and work outcomes (Higgins et al., 2003; Lai, 2004). In a field study, several intervening variables might detract the effectiveness of influence tactics. Contrary, in a laboratory environment, one is able to exert more control over the situation and manipulate independent variables more precisely (Higgins et al., 2003).

In this study, we have aimed to create the content of the experiment vignettes as equal as possible. But there were small discrepancies as the various influence tactics have formed the content and emphasized various characteristic of Robert and arguments for his request. Altogether, this limited information was very different from an actual workplace context, where raters typically would have the opportunity to observe the ratee over a long period of time and across many situations. On the other hand, these vignettes were quite consistent and concrete in their application of a certain influence tactic or a specific influence tactic combination. Thus, the observed effects might be stronger than in real life situations where employees strive to consistently employ influence tactics that might affect the evaluation of his or her performance (Higgins et al., 2003). Because participants had a limited knowledge of Robert's background, their perceptions must have been based on this sole and limited information. But as the vignettes functioned as a brief encounter with Robert, we have argued that the influence tactic used is likely to have exerted more impact than the influence behavior would have been able to over a longer period of time (Higgins et al., 2003). Another concern we had regarding the vignettes and their content was that we acknowledged that the vignettes, where Robert either presented himself or was described by a person who knew him, had the main aim of promoting him to the Project Manager position. By this, one of the three work outcomes might be given

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precedence. One can argue that this could have made an impact on the ratings and probably resulted in more distinct results on the question regarding exactly job promotion. However, this was not the case. Hence, we argued that this has not resulted in a threat to the content validity (Lai, 2004).

As previously mentioned, we have tried to make the vignettes as consistent as possible. But we had to acknowledge one discrepancy in the introductory text for the control vignette between experiment 1 and 2. In the first experiment the formulation emphasized that it is Robert's supervisor who described him, whereas the role or function of this person is not clearly stated in experiment 2. This might be a threat to internal validity due to instrumental matters (Lai, 2004), but we have claimed that the difference was not of great impact as the means for the two conditions were very similar.

In summary, we would like to emphasize that we have inspected our research and concluded that we have fulfilled the fundamental requirements for causal inferences and critically examined relevant threats to validity (Lai, 2004).

### **Implications and future research**

Drawing upon our findings, it appeared that rational arguments were more effective than assertive behavior when trying to achieve a positive competence assessment, job promotion, and salary increase. In negotiation settings where persuasion is crucial, one might take advantage of applying rational arguments. Additionally, by using the most effective tactic, one has a greater likelihood of rising through the ranks and achieve ones goals of personal advancement at work. Moreover, we stressed the importance of source credibility as an important factor in influence attempts. Hence, future research might contribute to the understanding of control, whether we have introduced a more credible source, or what other psychological phenomenon a control condition really consists of.

We have argued that the three work outcomes were highly related, and that especially competence assessment might influence the result on job promotion and salary increase. This implied that the achievement of a positive competence assessment increased the likelihood of attaining a job promotion and/or salary increase. Further, obtaining a job promotion in itself might lead to pay raise. This

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stressed the importance of performing ones job well and applying influence tactics if necessary in order to achieve great ratings on the competence assessment that occurs regularly and consequently increases the likelihood of getting offers of job promotion and salary increase.

As previously mentioned, we found that gender had a moderating effect on the ratings of competence assessment and job promotion when being exposed to ingratiation and exchange. As we did not know whether this gender difference was due to preferences for influence tactics or preference for ones' own gender, this was something future research should consider, since earlier findings have found support for both to occur. We have considered the inclusion of a female object in addition to a male object as especially important, as it would map the tendencies for whether there was a preference for one's own gender and/or a gendered preference towards influence tactic use. And as we found support for a moderating effect of gender on competence assessment and job promotion, we especially urge that more research be conducted on the possible impact gender might have on these work outcomes.

In addition to gender, we included age as a control variable, but the results showed no significant moderator effect. Further, we have suggested that future research should include tenure, as this individual characteristic might affect the perception and use of influence tactics as well as affect the likelihood of being promoted (Thacker & Wayne, 1995). Following, we have suggested that age and tenure should also be considered in future research on influence tactics and work outcomes in order to examine in more detail how these individual characteristics related to the perception and use of the influence tactics in this context.

Moreover, as there exists little research on exchange in relation to work outcomes (Higgins et al., 2003), this influence tactic should be taken into further consideration. We have contributed to the field of influence tactics by studying combinations of influence tactics in relation to work outcomes. We have answered the call made by Higgins et al. (2003), but our findings gave no significant results. This is something future research should continue to look further into.

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We have only applied one method, namely vignettes. Future research should apply several methods in order to see if the same results occur across them. Further, we call for field research in order to investigate the application of influence tactics in their natural environment, namely in the workplace. This research would be able to examine intervening variables that might detract from the effectiveness of influence tactics and give a broader understanding of this domain. Additionally, one might be able to examine the effectiveness of the influence tactics over time in their natural environment.

As we have only studied an upward influence attempt, we suggest that future research should consider this direction, as well as other directions of influence, in order to gain more insight into the studied influence tactics' effectiveness on work outcomes. The notion that previous research reported their varied successfulness in different directions (Gordon, 1996; Smith et al., 2013; Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl & Tracey, 1992) supports this request.

### **Concluding Remarks**

In this study we have investigated the effects of influence tactics in upward influence attempts in obtaining work outcomes in three experiments. Our findings from experiment 1 revealed that there were significant differences between rational persuasion and assertiveness in obtaining a positive competence assessment, job promotion, and salary increase. Out of the two influence tactics, rational persuasion was the most effective on all three work outcomes. Further, a surprising finding was that the effects from control were the most effective in obtaining competence assessment and job promotion. In experiment 2, we introduced two other influence tactics, ingratiation and exchange, in addition to the replication of the control condition from experiment 1. The findings from experiment 2 revealed that although ingratiation achieved higher mean scores than exchange on competence assessment and job promotion, there were no significant differences in the means between ingratiation and exchange on the three work outcomes. However, the control condition achieved significant higher mean scores than both influence tactics on all three work outcomes.

In order to respond to the research gap on the effects of influence tactic combinations on work outcomes, we introduced this in experiment 3. The results

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revealed that there were no significant differences between the combination of ingratiation & rational persuasion and assertiveness & rational persuasion. However, the combination of ingratiation & rational persuasion achieved the highest mean scores on all three work outcomes.

We have argued that the perception, reception, interpretation, and understanding of influence attempts partly resulted from our state of mind. We have claimed that the unconscious thought of System 1 influenced our response to the behavior and affected our judgments (Wilson, 2002). However, when System 2 settled in, we argued that it evaluated the work outcomes more thoroughly, which might result in complex inquiries being considered on a higher conscious level. Additionally, we have argued that the familiarity of the applied influence tactic affected the level it was evaluated upon. Hence, this highlighted the fact that external factors guided the effectiveness of influence tactics, as well as the rater's state of mind.

We have considered the inclusion and examination of the control condition with a neutral vignette to be a great contribution in the research of influence tactics and work outcomes. Although we do not think we succeeded in creating a neutral vignette, we considered the condition to have given us valuable insight into sources of influence, and more specifically the importance of source credibility. This has stressed the value of having a network when seeking new opportunities at work where recommendations and credible information are sought. This is also related to the state of mind, as messages from a credible source passed through System 1 and were not consciously evaluated.

Our study also offered interesting findings regarding gender as a moderator when men and women rated competence assessment and considered job promotion when being exposed to ingratiation and exchange. In line with previous research, we have argued that the genders did not perceive influence tactics in the same way nor did they apply and perceive their own and the opposite gender likewise. After decades of little interest regarding this individual characteristic, we have argued that it was about time to start considering the importance of this variable in the context of influence tactic use at work. We namely considered this to be a finding worth pursuing in future research as it might indicate that there was more to explore for this individual characteristic than what was previously found.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1a: Rational persuasion, English version

Suppose you are a manager in a Norwegian telephone company. The telephone company is facing different challenges. To solve some of these challenges, you and the CEO of the company establish a project group responsible for coming up with new creative business solutions. Robert, one of your subordinates, is interested in the position as Project Manager and he has now sent you a letter where he is sharing his thoughts:

*“As you probably know, I have a master’s degree in finance from a well-known business school and I have shown good results during my time in the company. These results can be documented. In addition to having higher education, I also have several years of experience from various companies in different industries. This could be the some of the reasons why my colleagues asks for my guidance and help. To ensure that we get the best perspective to base our decisions upon, my*

*background and expertise can be useful tools in order to be effective and cost efficient in different settings. We have a lot of talents in this organization, and I believe I have the ability to utilize this talent. Considering the situation the organization currently is in, I believe my competences can be of great advantage in a project manager position. Last week for instance, our CEO praised my effort and hard work that I have put in over time.”*

**Appendix 1b: Rational persuasion, Norwegian version**

Se for deg at du er mellomleder i et norsk telekommunikasjonsselskap, som står overfor en del utfordringer. For å løse disse problemene har du, i samråd med daglig leder, besluttet å opprette en prosjektgruppe med ansvar for å komme opp med nye og kreative forretningsideer. En av dine ansatte, Robert, er interessert i stillingen som prosjektleder for denne gruppen og har sendt deg følgende tekst:

*“Som du vet, så har jeg en mastergrad i finans fra en meget velkjent institusjon og jeg kan dokumentere gode resultater i løpet av min tid som ansatt i dette selskapet. I tillegg til høyere utdanning har jeg også flere års erfaring fra flere bedrifter innen ulike industrier. Dette kan være en av grunnene til at mine kolleger spør akkurat meg om hjelp og råd når de er usikre. Jeg mener at min bakgrunn og ekspertise utgjør gode verktøy for å sørge for at vi får belyst de viktigste perspektivene på en god*

*måte før vi tar en beslutning som vil være både kreativ og inntekstgenererende i ulike settinger. Vi har mange talenter i denne organisasjonen og jeg tror jeg har evnen til å utnytte disse talentene til det beste for bedriften. Med tanke på situasjonen bedriften befinner seg i, mener jeg min kompetanse kan komme godt til nytte i en prosjektlederstilling. Senest i forrige uke fikk jeg skryt av administrerende direktør for mitt bidrag og hardt arbeid jeg har lagt ned over tid.”*

**Appendix 2a: Assertiveness, English version**

Suppose you are a manager in a Norwegian telephone company. The telephone company is facing different challenges. To solve some of these challenges, you and the CEO of the company establish a project group responsible for coming up with new creative business solutions. Robert, one of your subordinates, is interested in the position as Project Manager and he has now sent you a letter where he is sharing his thoughts:

*“As you probably know, I have a master’s degree in finance from a well-known business school and I have clearly shown good results during my time in the company. In addition, I have several years of experience from various companies in different industries. Often my colleagues need my guidance and help. I might have to check that they*

*actually do what they should do, and if not, I might push them in the right direction. It is not difficult for me to find another job or focus more on myself instead of putting the company first. Loosing me as an employee will be a huge loss for the company and I expect you to make the right decision. Hiring me is the best option.”*

**Appendix 2b: Assertiveness, Norwegian version**

Se for deg at du er mellomleder i et norsk telekommunikasjonsselskap, som står overfor en del utfordringer. For å løse disse problemene har du, i samråd med daglig leder, besluttet å opprette en prosjektgruppe med ansvar for å komme opp med nye og kreative forretningsideer. En av dine ansatte, Robert, er interessert i stillingen som prosjektleder for denne gruppen og har sendt deg følgende tekst:

*”Som du vet, så har jeg en mastergrad i finans fra en meget velkjent institusjon og jeg har tydelig vist gode resultater i løpet av min tid som ansatt i dette selskapet. I tillegg har jeg mange års erfaring fra flere bedrifter innen ulike industrier. Jeg gir mine kolleger ofte hjelp og råd. Det hender jeg dobbeltsjekker at de faktisk gjør det de burde gjøre, og hvis de ikke gjør det må jeg presse dem i riktig retning. Det ville ikke*

*vært unaturlig for meg å fokusere på min egen karriere fremfor å bli her i denne stillingen jeg har nå. Det ville ikke vært vanskelig for meg å skaffe meg en annen jobb. Jeg fortjener å få stillingen som prosjektleder, noe som også vil være til det beste for bedriften. Å miste meg vil være et stort tap for bedriften og jeg regner med at du tar den riktige avgjørelsen. Å ansette meg er den beste løsningen.”*

**Appendix 3a: Control condition, Experiment 1, English version**

Suppose you are a manager in a Norwegian telephone company. The telephone company is facing different challenges. To solve some of these challenges, you and the CEO of the company establish a project group responsible for coming up with new creative business solutions. Robert, one of your subordinates, is interested in the position as Project Manager. His supervisor has sent you a description of him and asked you to give an evaluation of him.

*“Robert has a master’s degree in finance from a well-known business school and has shown good results during his time in the company. In addition to having higher education, he also has several years of experience from various companies in different industries. His colleagues ask for his guidance and help. To ensure that the project group gets the best perspective to base their decisions upon, Robert’s background and expertise can be useful tools in*

*order to be effective and cost efficient in different settings. We have a lot of talents in this organization, and Robert has the ability to utilize this talent. Considering the situation the organization currently is in, Robert’s competencies can be of great advantage in a project manager position. Last week for instance, our CEO praised his effort and hard work that he had put in over time.”*

**Appendix 3b: Control condition, Experiment 1, Norwegian version**

Se for deg at du er HR-medarbeider i et norsk telekommunikasjonsselskap, som står overfor en del utfordringer. For å løse disse problemene har daglig leder besluttet å opprette en prosjektgruppe med ansvar for å komme opp med nye og kreative forretningsideer. En ansatt i bedriften, Robert, er interessert i stillingen som prosjektleder for denne gruppen. I den forbindelse har daglig leder sendt deg en beskrivelse av Robert og bedt deg om å gjøre en vurdering av ham.

*”Robert har en mastergrad i finans fra en velkjent institusjon og har vist gode resultater i løpet av sin tid som ansatt i selskapet. I tillegg til høyere utdanning har han også flere års erfaring fra flere bedrifter innen ulike industrier. Hans kolleger spør ham om hjelp og råd når de er usikre. Roberts ekspertise kan utgjøre gode verktøy for at prosjektgruppen får belyst de viktigste perspektivene på en god måte før de tar en beslutning som vil*

*kunne være både kreativ og inntekstgenererende i ulike settinger. Det er mange talenter i denne organisasjonen og Robert kan ha evnen til å utnytte disse talentene til det beste for bedriften. Med tanke på situasjonen bedriften befinner seg i, kan Roberts kompetanse komme til nytte i en prosjektlederstilling. Robert har også mottatt skryt fra administrerende direktør for sitt bidrag og hardt arbeid.”*

**Appendix 4a: Response sheet page for conditions in Experiment 1, English version**

**Based on this letter, consider the following questions. Please circle around your answer:**

**1. How competent do you perceive Robert to be?**

Very incompetent 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very competent

**2. How willing are you to recommend Robert to the position as Project Manager?**

Very reluctant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very willing

**3. If Robert is to start as Project Manager he wants a salary increase. How willing are you to give Robert a salary of 20% more than he has in his present job?**

Very reluctant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very willing

**Appendix 4b: Response sheet page for conditions in Experiment 1,  
Norwegian version**

**Basert på denne teksten vil vi nå at du svarer på disse følgende spørsmålene ved å tegne en sirkel rundt ditt svar.**

**1. Hvor kompetent anser du Robert for å være?**

Svært inkompetent 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Svært kompetent

**2. Hvor villig er du til å anbefale Robert for stillingen som prosjektleder?**

Svært motvillig 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Svært villig

**3. Hvis Robert får denne stillingen vil han komme til å ønske høyere lønn.**

**Hvor villig er du til å gi ham 20 % mer enn han har i sin nåværende jobb?**

Svært motvillig 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Svært villig

**Appendix 5a: Ingratiation, English version**

Suppose you are a middle manager in a Norwegian medium-sized company. The company is facing different challenges. To solve some of these challenges, you and the CEO of the company establish a project group responsible for coming up with new creative business solutions. Robert, one of your subordinates, is interested in the position as Project Manager and he has sent you a letter where he is sharing his thoughts:

*“As you probably know, I am very interested in the position as Project Manager. We both have education from a well-known business school, and I think this is why I have accomplished a lot in such a short time. When I was told it was you who were to select the new Project Manager I knew it was the most qualified of us to be given that task. We both agree on the fact that there are several talents in this organization. I think and know that*

*we both consider me to be able to utilize and preserve these talents to the best for our organization in every project I am managing. As a manager you have always seen your subordinates and their needs. I am thankful for everything I have learned from you, and for being so fortunate to work with you. I hope I can pursue your leadership style so that the employees, and not the least our clients, always will be well taken care of.”*

**Appendix 5b: Ingratiation, Norwegian version**

Se for deg at du er mellomleder i et norsk mellomstort selskap, som står overfor en del utfordringer. For å løse disse utfordringene har du, i samråd med øverste leder, besluttet å opprette en prosjektgruppe med ansvar for å komme opp med nye og kreative forretningsideer. En av dine ansatte, Robert, er interessert i stillingen som prosjektleder for denne gruppen og har sendt deg følgende tekst:

*“Som du vet er jeg veldig interessert i prosjektlederstillingen. Vi har jo begge en utdanning fra en meget velkjent institusjon og jeg tror nok at dette har gjort at vi har oppnådd mye på kort tid. Når jeg fikk vite at det var deg som skulle velge ut den nye prosjektlederen visste jeg at den mest kvalifiserte blant oss hadde blitt satt på oppgaven. Vi er begge enige om at det er flere talenter i denne organisasjonen. Jeg tror og vet at vi*

*begge mener at jeg har evnen til å utnytte og ta vare på disse talentene til det beste for bedriften vår i hvert enkelt prosjekt jeg leder. Som leder har du alltid sett dine ansatte og deres behov. Jeg er takknemlig for alt jeg har lært av deg, og at jeg har vært så heldig og fått jobbe med deg. Jeg håper også jeg kan videreføre lederstilen din slik at de ansatte og ikke minst våre kunder alltid vil føle at de blir ivaretatt.”*

**Appendix 6a: Exchange, English version**

Suppose you are a middle manager in a Norwegian medium-sized company. The company is facing different challenges. To solve some of these challenges, you and the CEO of the company establish a project group responsible for coming up with new creative business solutions. Robert, one of your subordinates, is interested in the position as Project Manager and he has sent you a letter where he is sharing his thoughts:

*"As you probably know, I am very interested in the position as Project Manager. Ever since I started in the company you have been a great support, even when I have been working on projects that has been very demanding and when details have gone beyond my competence. I know that my background and experience will come in handy. Nevertheless I need your help and support to recommend me to the position. If you are able to influence that decision so that I acquire the*

*position, you will always have support in me. And in these turbulent times it is always good to know that you have someone to support you 100%. If you help me now, I want you to know that you can ask me for any favor, whatever it may be, in the future. Even though I don't have that much influence in the company now, this will be changed if I become the Project Manager. It is in everyone's interest that the position is filled by the most qualified candidate."*

**Appendix 6b: Exchange, Norwegian version**

Se for deg at du er mellomleder i et norsk mellomstort selskap, som står overfor en del utfordringer. For å løse disse utfordringene har du, i samråd med øverste leder, besluttet å opprette en prosjektgruppe med ansvar for å komme opp med nye og kreative forretningsideer. En av dine ansatte, Robert, er interessert i stillingen som prosjektleder for denne gruppen og har sendt deg følgende tekst:

*”Som du vet er jeg veldig interessert i prosjektlederstillingen. Helt siden jeg begynte i firmaet har jeg alltid følt at du har vært en god støttespiller selv når jeg har jobbet på prosjekter som har vært svært krevende og når detaljer har ligget utenfor mitt kompetansenivå. Min bakgrunn og erfaring vet jeg vil komme godt med. Allikevel trenger jeg din hjelp og støtte til å anbefale meg til prosjektlederstillingen. Hvis du har mulighet til å bidra til at jeg får stillingen, vil du alltid ha en*

*støttespiller i meg, og i disse turbulente tider er det alltid kjekt å vite at man har noen som støtter deg 100 %. Hjelper du meg nå, vil jeg også at du skal vite at du i fremtiden kan spørre meg om en tjeneste uansett hva det måtte være. Selv om jeg i dag kanskje ikke har så mye påvirkningskraft i bedriften, endrer dette seg hvis jeg får denne stillingen. Alle er jo interessert i at stillingen blir besatt av den mest kvalifiserte søkeren.”*

**Appendix 7a: Control condition, Experiment 2, English version**

Suppose you are a middle manager in a Norwegian medium-sized company. The company is facing different challenges. To solve some of these challenges, you and the CEO of the company establish a project group responsible for coming up with new creative business solutions. Robert, one of your subordinates, is interested in the position as Project Manager and we have received the following information about him:

*“Robert has a master’s degree in finance from a well-known business school and has shown good results during his time in the company. In addition to having higher education, he also has several years of experience from various companies in different industries. His colleagues ask for his guidance and help. To ensure that the project group gets the best perspective to base their decisions upon, Robert’s background and expertise can be useful tools in*

*order to be effective and cost efficient in different settings. We have a lot of talents in this organization, and Robert has the ability to utilize this talent. Considering the situation the organization currently is in, Robert’s competencies can be of great advantage in a project manager position. Last week for instance, our CEO praised his effort and hard work that he had put in over time.”*

**Appendix 7b: Control condition, Experiment 2, Norwegian version**

Se for deg at du er mellomleder i et norsk mellomstort selskap, som står overfor en del utfordringer. For å løse disse utfordringene har du, i samråd med øverste leder, besluttet å opprette en prosjektgruppe med ansvar for å komme opp med nye og kreative forretningsideer. En av dine ansatte, Robert, er interessert i stillingen som prosjektleder for denne gruppen og vi har fått følgende informasjon om ham:

*”Robert har en mastergrad i finans fra en velkjent institusjon og har vist gode resultater i løpet av sin tid som ansatt i selskapet. I tillegg til høyere utdanning har han også flere års erfaring fra flere bedrifter innen ulike industrier. Hans kolleger spør ham om hjelp og råd når de er usikre. Roberts ekspertise kan utgjøre gode verktøy for at prosjektgruppen får belyst de viktigste perspektivene på en god måte før de tar en beslutning som vil*

*kunne være både kreativ og inntekstgenererende i ulike settinger. Det er mange talenter i denne organisasjonen og Robert kan ha evnen til å utnytte disse talentene til det beste for bedriften. Med tanke på situasjonen bedriften befinner seg i, kan Roberts kompetanse komme til nytte i en prosjektlederstilling. Robert har også mottatt skryt fra administrerende direktør for sitt bidrag og hardt arbeid.”*

**Appendix 8a: Ingratiation and Rational persuasion, English version**

Suppose you are a middle manager in a Norwegian medium-sized company. The company is facing different challenges. To solve some of these challenges, you and the CEO of the company establish a project group responsible for coming up with new creative business solutions. Robert, one of your subordinates, is interested in the position as Project Manager and he has sent you a letter where he is sharing his thoughts:

*“As you know, I have a master’s degree in finance from a well-known business school and have shown good results during my time in the company. In addition to having higher education, I have also several years of experience from various companies in different industries. This can be one of the reasons why my colleagues ask me when they are uncertain. I think my background and expertise can be useful tools in order to consider the most important perspectives in a good way. When I*

*was told it was you who were to select the new Project Manager I knew it was the most qualified of us to be given that task. As a manager you have always seen your subordinates and their needs. I am thankful for everything I have learned from you, and for being so fortunate to work with you. I hope I can pursue your leadership style so that the employees, and not the least our clients, always will be well taken care of.”*

**Appendix 8b: Ingratiation and Rational persuasion, Norwegian version**

Se for deg at du er mellomleder i et norsk mellomstort selskap, som står overfor en del utfordringer. For å løse disse utfordringene har du, i samråd med øverste leder, besluttet å opprette en prosjektgruppe med ansvar for å komme opp med nye og kreative forretningsideer. En av dine ansatte, Robert, er interessert i stillingen som prosjektleder for denne gruppen og har sendt deg følgende tekst:

*”Som du vet, så har jeg en mastergrad i finans fra en meget velkjent institusjon og kan dokumentere gode resultater i løpet av min tid som ansatt. I tillegg til høyere utdanning har jeg også mange års erfaring fra flere bedrifter innen ulike industrier. Dette kan være en av grunnene til at mine kolleger spør akkurat meg om hjelp og råd når de er usikre. Jeg mener at min bakgrunn og ekspertise utgjør gode verktøy for å sørge for at vi får belyst de viktigste perspektivene på*

*en god måte. Når jeg fikk vite at det var deg som skulle velge ut den nye prosjektlederen visste jeg at den mest kvalifiserte blant oss hadde blitt satt på oppgaven. Som leder har du alltid sett dine ansatte og deres behov. Jeg er takknemlig for alt jeg har lært av deg, og at jeg har vært så heldig og fått jobbe med deg. Jeg håper også jeg kan videreføre lederstilen din slik at de ansatte og ikke minst våre kunder alltid vil føle at de blir ivaretatt.”*

**Appendix 9a: Assertiveness and Rational persuasion, English version**

Suppose you are a middle manager in a Norwegian medium-sized company. The company is facing different challenges. To solve some of these challenges, you and the CEO of the company establish a project group responsible for coming up with new creative business solutions. Robert, one of your subordinates, is interested in the position as Project Manager and he has sent you a letter where he is sharing his thoughts:

*“As you know, I have a master’s degree in finance from a well-known business school and have shown good results during my time in the company. In addition to higher education, I have also several years of experience from various companies in different industries. This can be one of the reasons why my colleagues ask me when they are uncertain. To ensure that the project group gets the best perspective to base their decisions upon, my background and expertise can be*

*useful tools in order to be effective and cost efficient in different settings. It would not have been unnatural for me to focus on my own career instead of continuing in the position I currently have, and it is not difficult for me to find another job. I deserve to become the Project Manager, which would also be to the best for the company. Loosing me as an employee will be a huge loss for the company and I expect you to make the right decision. Hiring me is the best option.”*

**Appendix 9b: Assertiveness and Rational persuasion, Norwegian version**

Se for deg at du er mellomleder i et norsk mellomstort selskap, som står overfor en del utfordringer. For å løse disse utfordringene har du, i samråd med øverste leder, besluttet å opprette en prosjektgruppe med ansvar for å komme opp med nye og kreative forretningsideer. En av dine ansatte, Robert, er interessert i stillingen som prosjektleder for denne gruppen og har sendt deg følgende tekst:

*“Som du vet, har jeg en mastergrad i finans fra en meget velkjent institusjon og jeg kan dokumentere gode resultater i løpet av min tid som ansatt i selskapet. I tillegg til høyere utdanning har jeg også mange års erfaring fra flere bedrifter innen ulike industrier. Dette kan være en av grunnene til at mine kolleger spør akkurat meg om hjelp og råd når de er usikre. Jeg mener at min bakgrunn og ekspertise er gode verktøy i arbeidet for å ta en beslutning som vil være både kreativ og*

*inntekstgenererende i ulike settinger. Det ville ikke vært unaturlig for meg å fokusere på min egen karriere fremfor å bli her i denne stillingen jeg har nå. Det ville ikke vært vanskelig for meg å skaffe meg en annen jobb. Jeg fortjener å få stillingen som prosjektleder, noe som også vil være til det beste for bedriften. Å miste meg vil være et stort tap for bedriften og jeg regner med at du tar den riktige avgjørelsen. Å ansette meg er den beste løsningen.”*

**Appendix 10a: Response sheet page for conditions in Experiment 2 and 3,  
English version**

**Based on this letter, consider the following questions. Please tick off your answer.**

**1. How competent do you perceive Robert to be?**

Very incompetent							Very competent
<input type="checkbox"/>							

**2. How willing are you to recommend Robert to the position as Project Manager?**

Very reluctant							Very willing
<input type="checkbox"/>							

**3. If Robert is to start as Project Manager he wants a salary increase. How willing are you to give Robert a salary of 20% more than he has in his present job?**

Very reluctant							Very willing
<input type="checkbox"/>							

**4. Are you male or female?**

Female  
 Male

**5. What is your age?**

- 20	21-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70 -
<input type="checkbox"/>						

Thank you for participating!

---

**Appendix 10b: Response sheet page for conditions in Experiment 2 and 3,  
Norwegian version**

**Basert på teksten du akkurat har lest, ønsker vi at du tar stilling til følgende spørsmål ved å krysse av svarene dine.**

**1. Hvor kompetent vil du tro at Robert er?**

Svært inkompetent							Svært kompetent
<input type="checkbox"/>							

**2. Hvor villig er du til å anbefale Robert for stillingen som prosjektleder?**

Svært motvillig							Svært villig
<input type="checkbox"/>							

**3. Hvis Robert får tilbud om stillingen vil han komme til å be om høyere lønn. Hvor sannsynlig er det at du vil gi ham 20 % mer enn det han har i sin nåværende jobb?**

Svært usannsynlig							Svært sannsynlig
<input type="checkbox"/>							

**4. Er du mann eller kvinne?**

Kvinne  
 Mann

**5. Hva er din alder?**

- 20	21-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70 -
<input type="checkbox"/>						

Takk for at du tok deg tid til å delta!

**Appendix 11: Preliminary Thesis Report**

BI Norwegian Business School

Preliminary Thesis Report

- An investigation of  
influence tactics and  
work outcomes -

Hand-in date:  
15.01.2013

Name of supervisor:  
Linda Lai, Professor

Examination code and name:  
GRA 1902 Preliminary Thesis Report

Program:  
Master of Science in Leadership and Organizational Psychology

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## Summary

This preliminary thesis report aim to investigate the effect of influence tactics (ITs) on different work outcomes, and more specifically examine the effectiveness of upward influence attempts in attaining positive competence assessment, salary increase and job promotion. Even though ITs have been extensively researched, it still seems unclear which IT is the most effective in obtaining these work outcomes. The report presents four ITs, some widely studied and one less studied tactic in order to contribute to the question of which IT is the most effective in achieving specific work outcomes. Through 3 different experiments we will examine the effect of assertiveness, exchange, ingratiation and rational persuasion.

The ITs in experiment 1, which already have been conducted, are rational persuasion and assertiveness. The researchers found that the rational persuasion condition had higher mean scores than the assertiveness condition on all three work outcomes. Surprisingly, the control condition produced the highest mean scores. In experiment 2, ingratiation and exchange will be studied in order to see which IT is the most effective in achieving positive competence assessment, salary increase and job promotion. In addition to a call for more research on less studied tactics as exchange, researchers have also requested research on combinations of ITs on work outcomes. This is the aim in experiment 3.

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## Introduction

The aim of this study is to investigate the effect of ITs on different work outcomes and more specifically examine the effectiveness of upward influence attempts in attaining positive competence assessment, salary increase, and job promotion. The ITs we will investigate are rational persuasion, assertiveness, ingratiation and exchange. Rational persuasion involves using logical arguments and factual evidence, while assertiveness involves using demands, threats, and intimidation (Yukl & Falbe, 1990). Assertiveness is shown to be effective on different work outcomes (Higgins, Judge, & Ferris, 2003). Ingratiation implies adulation and aim to exercise influence on a person in order to support a proposal or carry out a request. This IT has been extensively studied and results point to a strong positive relationship between this tactic and work outcomes (Higgins et al., 2003). The fourth IT in our study is exchange, which involves exchange of favors, or an offer of something desired by the targets in order to make them do what the agent requests. This tactic has, in contradiction to ingratiation, not received much research attention and gives rather unclear results (Yukl & Tracey, 1992).

“Influence is a process in which individuals modify others’ behavior, thoughts, and feelings” (Cartwright, 1959; Lewin, 1951, as cited in Anderson & Kilduff, 2009, 491). Cialdini and Rhoads (2001, p. 10) state: “Principles that influence human psychology can be useful in a variety of situations, such as business dealings, societal interactions, and personal relationships”. Since we focus on influence attempts made by an employee, the usefulness of ITs can be related to outcomes which are typically desirable for an employee, for instance promotions and salary increases. In general, different ITs have been found to be effective on different work outcomes (e.g., Chakrabarty, Brown, & Widing II 2010; Higgins et al., 2003; Higgins & Judge 2004; Stern & Westphal 2010; Yukl & Tracey 1992; Westphal & Stern 2006, 2007), and ITs have shown to be well used both in organizations and in everyday life (Cialdini, 2009).

Power has been pointed to as an important element in persuasion and influence (Yukl & Falbe, 1990; French & Raven, 1968). Eaton et al. (2009) argue that power could increase the likelihood of an influence attempt being successful.

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They argue that middle-aged adults tend to be more resistant to attitudinal change than younger and older adults, and propose that this is partly due to the fact that social power peaks in midlife. However, power also stems from different sources than demographic factors, e.g., reward and coercive power, legitimate power, referent power, and expert power (French & Raven, 1968), and information power and persuasiveness (Yukl & Falbe, 1991). Power can be defined as: “(...) the ability to provide or withhold valued resources or administer punishments” (Anderson & Berdahl 2002, p. 1362). By some researchers, power has been defined as the ability to influence others (Galinsky et al., 2006). As Gruenfeld et al. (2008) have done, we will name this ability social power.

As derives from the discussion above, influence is the process of modifying others, while social power is the ability to do so. This social power can derive from several sources, and ITs can take several forms. For instance, Kipnis, Schmidt and Wilkinson (1980) conducted an exploratory study where they investigated ITs used by people at work to influence their superiors, co-workers, and subordinates. Based on a factor analysis, eight factors, or ITs, emerged. Four of these factors are assertiveness, ingratiation, rationality and exchange. Further, Yukl and Falbe (1990) conducted a study aimed at replicating and extending the previous work by Kipnis et al. (1980) which also found eight ITs, where four of these are ingratiation, exchange, pressure tactics and rational persuasion. According to Yukl and Falbe (1990) the latter are similar to assertiveness and rationality, respectively.

Most employees will probably be in a job situation where they can influence how the employer rates their competence, having the possibility to get a salary increase or get a job promotion. So what is the best approach in discussions with your employer when trying to obtain a beneficial competence assessment, get the promotion you want, or the salary increase you deserve? As some tactics are more effective for achieving certain work outcomes, then knowledge about which tactics and when to apply them should be relevant for all employees. Even though ITs have been studied more than 30 years, research has not successfully answered

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which IT is the most effective in obtaining positive work outcomes (Higgins et al., 2003).

We will investigate some of the most studied ITs and also examine a less studied tactic in order to contribute to the understanding of their effects on work outcomes. Further, researchers have requested more research on combinations of different ITs (Yukl & Falbe, 1992). If some tactics are more beneficial than others in obtaining positive work outcomes, one may assume that certain combinations of tactics may be equally or even more beneficial than a single IT. Research on combinations of ITs is needed to gain a more complete understanding and valuable insight to individuals who want to improve in influencing others. Higgins et al. (2003) found no studies examining the effects of IT combinations on work outcomes and this highlights a possible gap in the literature and we want to contribute with our master thesis also in this area. So, the purpose with our master thesis is to build on previous research, and examine a less studied IT, and well-studied ITs as well as combinations of tactics in order to contribute to the understanding of which ITs are most effective in obtaining specific work outcomes.

### **Theory and hypotheses**

In our master thesis we are planning to conduct 3 experiments which study different ITs and how they affect preferred work outcomes. One experiment has already been carried out, while the other two are scheduled in February and March, 2013 (Appendix 1). All experiments consider the three work outcomes salary increase, job promotion and competence assessment. The first experiment studied the use of rational persuasion and assertiveness, whereas the second experiment will examine ingratiation and exchange. In order to examine whether ITs are more effective in obtaining work outcomes than in a setting where no tactic are used, we have created a control condition for experiment 1, which also will be applied in experiment 2. Finally, the third experiment will examine the effect of combinations of tactics, with respectively ingratiation and rational persuasion as well as assertiveness and rational persuasion.

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**Experiment 1**

The purpose with this experiment was to examine whether rational persuasion is a more effective IT than assertiveness in achieving specific work outcomes. Also, we wanted to see whether these ITs were more effective than a neutral condition in achieving the work outcomes.

Cable and Judge (2003, p. 199) define rational persuasion as “(...) using logical arguments and factual evidence to persuade a target that a request will result in the attainment of task objectives”. This means that people who use this technique to exert influence over someone else focus on objective data and facts in order to form their arguments in a way that supports their opinion and makes it seem more preferable compared to a given alternative (Kipnis et al., 1980). Eagly and Chaiken (1984, as cited in Yukl & Tracey, 1992) give a very similar description of rational persuasion as a tactic where facts and logical argumentation is used in order to persuade others to comply with ones objectives. Yukl and Tracey (1992) describe rational persuasion as a flexible IT, meaning that it can be used both between peers as well as towards subordinates and supervisors. In this experiment rational persuasion was used in an upward direction from an employee towards a manager, which according to Yukl and Tracey (1992), is the most likely direction of this tactic. According to Yukl and Falbe (1990) rational persuasion is the most used IT. This is a tactic that most of us are familiar with and use for everyday debates and discussions, which is one of the reasons why it is interesting to investigate this tactic further within a business setting.

van Knippenberg and Steensma (2003) differentiate between soft and hard tactics, where rationality is seen as a soft IT. Soft tactics contain relatively low levels of control compared to hard tactics such as for instance assertiveness. Hard tactics are usually seen as more coercive and controlling from the target’s point of view (van Knippenberg & Steensma, 2003). In addition to a soft tactic, we have also chosen to make use of a hard tactic in this experiment, namely assertiveness. Kipnis et al. (1980) define assertiveness as using a forceful manner in order to attain one’s objectives. According to Yukl and Falbe (1990) this is a tactic where a person uses demands, threats or intimidation in order to get the target to comply

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with ones requests. They found that assertiveness is most often used in attempts to influence downward in the hierarchy rather than upward. Further, according to Yukl and Falbe (1990), using a single soft tactic is more effective than using a single hard tactic. In addition, Higgins et al. (2003) found that rational persuasion was positively related to performance assessments, while assertiveness had a negative relationship with performance assessments. We therefore hypothesize that using rational persuasion as an IT will yield better results than using assertiveness when trying to obtain any of the three work outcomes. Hence, we hypothesize that:

**Hypothesis 1:** *Participants in the rational persuasion condition are more inclined to a) provide a positive competence assessment, b) give job promotion, and c) give salary increase than the participants in the assertiveness condition.*

In addition to comparing the two ITs' effects on the three work outcomes, we also want to compare the ITs with the setting where no ITs are used. Considering the nature of ITs it is reasonable to expect these to be effective in attaining a specific outcome. Both rational persuasion and assertiveness have been found empirically to be effective on different outcomes. For instance, Higgins et al. (2003) found a positive effect between rational persuasion and salary increases, job promotions, and positive performance assessments, and between assertiveness and salary increases and job promotions. Another important aspect regarding assertiveness has to do with the level of dominance an individual has in a given situation. Anderson and Kilduff (2009) found that, in a group setting, those with higher scores on the dominance trait obtained higher levels of influence. They also discuss that the reason behind this effect could be that people who score high on this trait may have a behavior that make them appear more competent than what they really are (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009). While Higgins et al. (2003) found a positive relationship between assertiveness and salary increase and job promotion, they also found a negative effect with performance assessment. They state that the reason for the negative effect between assertiveness and performance assessment could be that assertive individuals are more aggressive in seeking out salary increases and job promotions than performance assessments. However, we hope

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to overcome this problem by manipulating the variables in a controlled experiment. Based on this one could assume that assertiveness would also have a positive effect on competence assessment. Thus, we hypothesize that:

**Hypothesis 2:** *Participants in the two IT conditions will be more inclined to provide a) positive competence assessment, b) job promotion, and c) salary increase than participants in the control condition.*

**Method.**

**Participants.** The sample in experiment 1 was a convenience sample, as it was chosen based on the convenience of the researchers (Black, 2009). The convenience sample consisted of Norwegian speaking students from the campus at BI Norwegian Business School in Oslo and the data collection was conducted during a two-day period at the BI library. We used a between-subject design, which implies that each subject was assigned to only one treatment condition (Pany & Reckers, 1987), either one of the two experimental groups or the control group. The researchers chose this design in order to exclude the possibility that the participants' score were influenced by experience gained in other treatment conditions. A total of 178 students were asked if they would like to participate in a short experiment. Of the 178 asked, 150 agreed to participate and they were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions. This gives a sample of 50 participants in each condition. Even though we did not collect gender data from the participants, approximately half of the sample was male and the other half was female. Before the experiment began, the participants were instructed to read through a text before answering three questions. Information was provided that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions and that all responses would remain confidential.

**Measures.** In this first experiment we had three dependent variables: competence assessment, job promotion, and salary increase. The classification of work outcomes are in line with previous research (Higgins et al., 2003) and each of the dependent variables reflects the three different questions in the questionnaires. All measures were rated on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging

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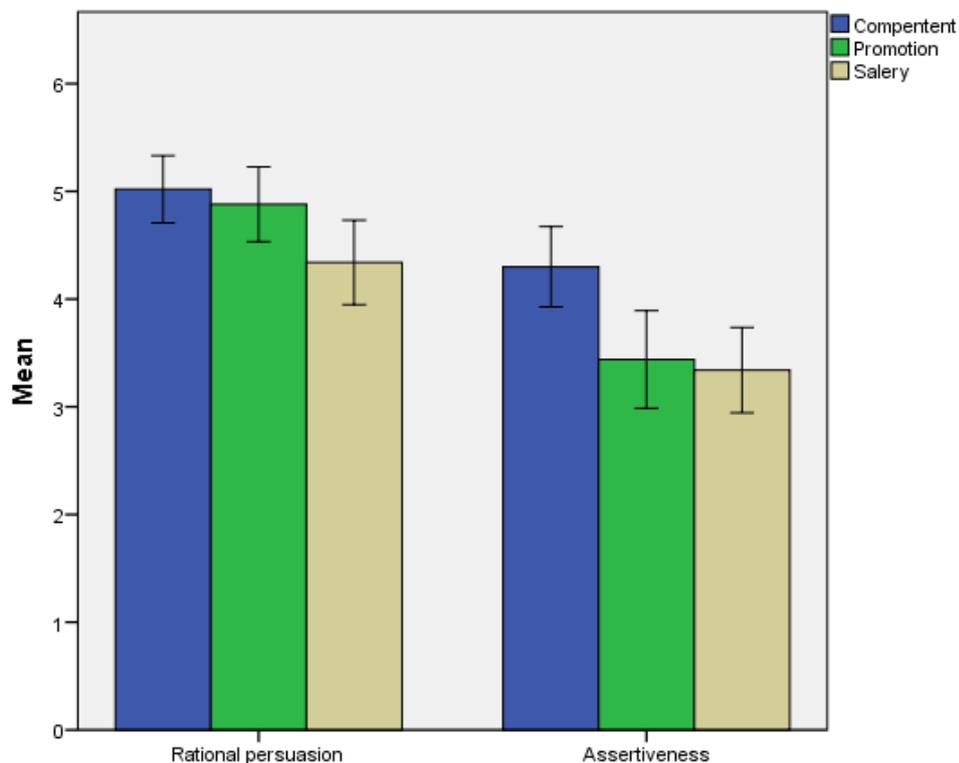
from 1 (e.g., very incompetent) to 7 (e.g., very competent). The measures of the independent variables, rational persuasion and assertiveness, were inspired by the Influence Behaviour Questionnaire by Yukl, Seifert, and Chavez (2008) and were made into several sentences describing an employee named Robert. In order to measure the impact of the different ITs in the experiment, a control condition was developed. The text for the control condition had the same introduction and questions as the previous two conditions, but instead of Robert describing himself and his work achievements, Robert's supervisor was describing him.

**Experiment procedure and text creation.** We made three different case texts, one for each condition (Appendices 2a, 3a, and 4a). The texts handed out to the participants were in Norwegian in order to avoid potential language problems considering that Norwegian is the participants' native language (Appendices 2b, 3b, and 4b). Ten copies of each text were tested in a pilot study with thirty respondents in total. After the participants had completed the questionnaires, the researchers asked the respondents different questions about what impressions they had about Robert and the text in general. This was done in order to prevent mistakes that might have been overlooked by the researchers. The feedback provided by the respondents gave valuable insights and new reflections and revealed that the assertiveness text needed some adjustments. For instance, the sentence: "I will push them in the right direction" was changed to: "I might push them in the right direction" in order to moderate the degree of aggressive behavior. The text for the control condition proved to be more challenging than expected since Robert was applying for a project manager position he clearly wanted. The task of making an influence free condition seemed almost impossible. After several drafts the researchers agreed to introduce a new approach; to let Robert's supervisor describe him instead. This seemed natural since Robert's supervisor has less of an incentive to exaggerate Robert's competence and skills.

### **Results.**

***Rational persuasion or assertiveness – which is better?*** After conducting the experiment we plotted the data in SPSS and ran several analyses to investigate

the findings. First, we ran descriptive statistics and found that, across all three work outcomes, the rational persuasion condition had higher mean scores on the seven-point Likert scale than the assertiveness condition. As can be seen from the descriptive statistics (Appendix 5), the mean scores of the assertiveness condition were 4.30, 3.44, and 3.34 on competence assessment, promotion, and salary increase, respectively. The mean scores of the rational persuasion condition, however, were 5.02, 4.88, and 4.34, on competence assessment, promotion, and salary increase, respectively. Means and standard deviations for both conditions are illustrated in the graph below.



In order to determine whether the means of the two conditions were significantly different from each other we ran a one-way ANOVA which showed that the P-values for both rational persuasion and assertiveness were smaller than 0.01 (Appendix 6). This indicates that the means of the two conditions were significantly different from each other. We also conducted a Post-Hoc analysis (Appendix 7), which “(...) tests for differences among all possible combinations of groups” (Hair et al. 2010, p. 442). This test revealed that the two conditions were significantly different from each other on all three outcomes. These findings

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gave support for hypothesis 1.

One reason for our results could be that assertiveness, as a hard tactic, might be perceived as inappropriate. Self-promotion, another hard tactic, was labeled by van Knippenberg and Steensma (2003) as a tactic which could potentially put a strain on the relationship between the influencer and the target over time. Further, Yukl and Tracey (1992) found that rational persuasion was the most effective tactic and that pressure was among the least effective tactics. They also found that rational persuasion was most used in an upward direction and that pressure was most used in a downward direction.

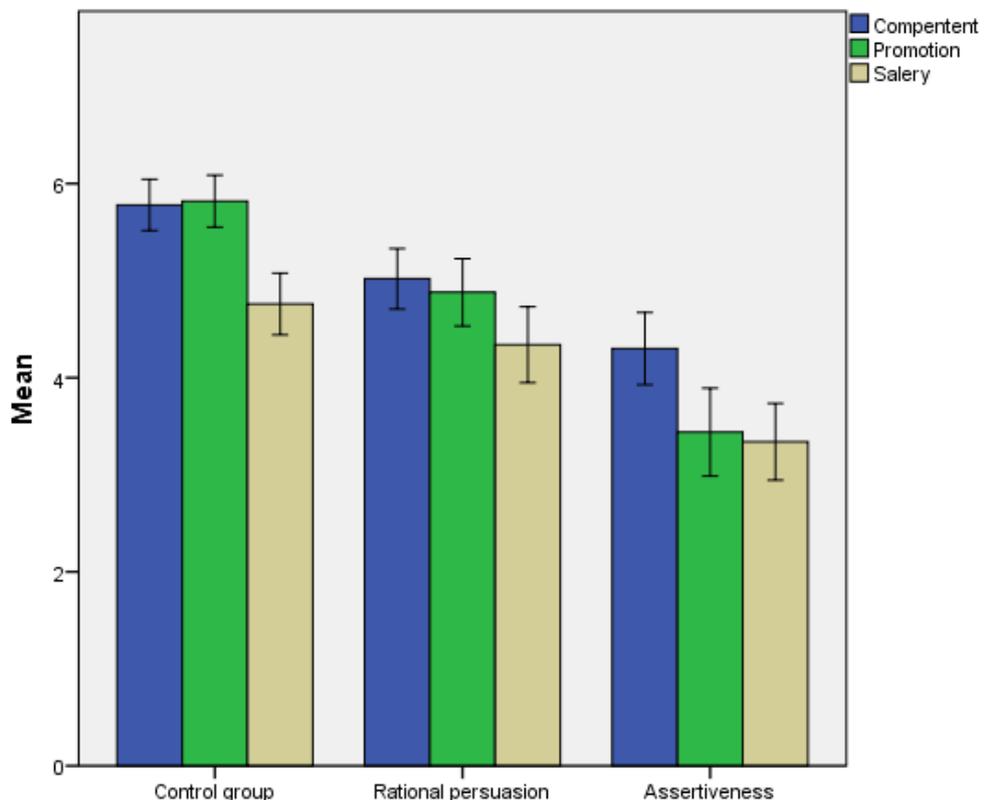
One reason why the participants in the rational persuasion condition had higher mean scores on the work outcomes than the participants in the assertiveness condition could be that rational persuasion is the most used IT (Yukl & Falbe, 1990), and could therefore be seen as an acceptable way of presenting ones points of view. If this is the case, assertive employees might be seen as less competent if they need to use a forceful manner in order to get what they want, rather than relying on objective facts and rational arguments. Assertive employees might also be seen as less likeable than those who use logical arguments. Since it is a hard tactic, assertiveness can be perceived as coercive and controlling from the target's point of view (van Knippenberg & Steensma, 2003). Rational arguments and soft tactics could be seen as more valuable in an organizational context. Here, assertiveness might represent an attitude one might not want to encourage in one's organization. Even though one may consider someone to be both competent and skillful, it does not automatically mean that one would like to reward this behavior with either a competence assessment, salary increase, or a job promotion. By assuming the role of a manager one might feel that rewarding assertive behavior sends a negative signal to the other employees, and thereby allows a potential rougher culture to emerge in the organization.

To conclude, the reason for why we got the results that we did could be that soft tactics, such as rational persuasion, are more effective than hard tactics, such as assertiveness, in an upward influence attempt. Assertiveness might be seen as aggressive and hence give a negative impression of the influencer. Assertive

people might be seen as less competent and their behavior viewed as undesirable in an organizational setting. Studies have shown that rational persuasion is the most often used IT and the most effective one across all the types of work outcomes we investigated. This is in accordance with our findings.

*Do ITs have an influence?* Above we could see that rational persuasion was more effective than assertiveness on all three outcomes. However, we also included a control condition in our experiment. In this condition, instead of having Robert describe himself and therefore making an attempt to influence the participants, we had Robert's supervisor describe him. This was done as an effort to remove the source of the influence attempt, and thereby the ITs. Whether this was accomplished is questionable and will be discussed. Moreover, we got some interesting results when including the control condition.

The mean effect of the control group on competence assessment, job promotion, and salary increase on a seven-point Likert scale was 5.78, 5.82, and 4.76, respectively (Appendix 5). Means and standard deviations have been illustrated in the graph below.



These means were significantly higher than the mean effects from rational persuasion and assertiveness (Appendix 6). One exception, which we will discuss later, is that the effect of the control condition and rational persuasion on salary increase was not significantly different from each other ( $\text{sig.}=.244$  – Appendix 7). Thus, hypothesis 2 was not supported. We have two possible explanations for these results. First, it could be that the manipulation had the desired consequence, that is, that we succeeded in manipulating an influence-free condition. If so, these results show that not using ITs will be more effective than using the ITs rational persuasion or assertiveness. Second, and possibly more likely, it could be that we did not succeed in manipulating an influence-free condition, but that we have increased the credibility of the source of influence. We will discuss these two possibilities in light of previous theoretical and empirical contributions in this area.

In their meta-analysis in 2003, Higgins et al. found support for most of these relationships. More specifically, they found that rational persuasion had a positive effect on all three outcomes, while assertiveness had a positive effect on salary increase and job promotion and a negative effect on performance assessments. However, they state that one possible explanation for the negative effect from assertiveness on performance assessments is that assertive people are more aggressive in seeking out or asking for pay raises and promotions than positive performance assessments (Higgins et al., 2003). This could influence their results since they have conducted a meta-analytic correlational study. However, in our study, we have manipulated the ITs and asked the participants specifically to make an assessment of all three outcomes. Hence, we believe we have overcome this issue and in our study we hypothesized that both ITs should have higher mean effects than the control condition on all outcomes.

Our results showed that the mean scores of the control condition were significantly higher than both rational persuasion and assertiveness, with one exception. That is that the effects of rational persuasion and the control condition on salary increase were not significantly different from each other. One could

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assume that the reason for using ITs is to gain a positive outcome for oneself. Is it so that ITs have the opposite effect from what is wished for? It has been demonstrated empirically that influence attempts are not always effective. For instance, Fu et al. (2004) found that cultural values can moderate the perceived effectiveness of influence strategies. It may be that the Norwegian culture could influence the effectiveness of the ITs in our experiment. It could be, for instance, that Norway has an egalitarian culture where the use of ITs could be perceived as inappropriate. This will be discussed further in the limitations. However, it could also be that, across cultures, assertiveness or hard tactics in general, are perceived as inappropriate.

When summarizing the results, hypothesis 1 was supported since the mean scores on competence assessment, salary increase and job promotion for rational persuasion was significantly higher than the mean scores for assertiveness. Further, the results revealed that the effect of the control condition and rational persuasion on salary increase was not significantly different from one another. Additionally, the results showed that the mean scores of the control condition were significantly higher than the ITs, with one exception. The effects of rational persuasion and the control condition on salary increase were namely not significantly different from one another. Hence, hypothesis 2 was not supported, and this questions the effect of the ITs and whether the control condition really was a neutral condition.

## **Experiment 2**

The purpose with this experiment is to study whether ingratiation is a more effective IT than exchange in achieving certain work outcomes. Also, we want to replicate the design from experiment 1 to study whether ingratiation and exchange are more effective than the control condition in achieving the work outcomes. Additionally, did we not ask the participants in the previous experiment about their age or gender, which made it impossible to analyze the variables' moderator effects. By controlling for these two demographical variables in the questionnaire for this experiment, we are planning to run a moderator regression analysis.

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Ingratiation can be defined as an agent uses praise and flattery before or during an attempt to influence the target person to carry out a request or support a proposal (Yukl et al., 2008). Ingratiation is, as rational persuasion, a soft tactic which encompasses influence attempts designed to secure compliance (Botero, Foste & Pace, 2012; Higgins et al., 2003). Ingratiation has received considerable research attention and research shows strong positive relationship with ingratiation and work outcomes (Higgins et al., 2003). There exist many definitions of this construct, and each focus on different dimensions of ingratiation behavior, similar compliance, self-promotion, flattery and opinion conformity (e.g. Botero et al., 2012; Higgins, 2003; Jones, 1964; Yukl et al., 2008). By focusing on the agent's use of flattery and praise Yukl et al. (2008) position themselves in the other-enhancement dimension of ingratiation. This is only one out of three distinct behaviors ingratiation behavior can be expressed as (Gordon, 1996; Jones, 1964; Westpahl & Stern, 2006, 2007).

One IT that that has received less attention in the literature is exchange (Higgins et al., 2003). Yukl et al. (2008) define exchange as the agent offers something the target person wants, or offers to reciprocate at a later time, if the target will do what the agent requests. Exchange is a hard tactic that aims to influence targets through greed and fear (Berson & Sosik, 2007). This IT involves offering and giving something desired by the target, if she or he meets the agreed-on performance expectations and this tactic implies that one offers incentives or exchange of favors (Berson & Sosik, 2007). Results for the consequences of using exchange are unlike ingratiation, not as clear or consistent (Yukl & Tracey, 1992). As mentioned, exchange has not been studied that extensively (Higgins et al., 2003), but Falbe and Yukl (1992) argue that an agent is most likely to use this IT when the target is reluctant to do what the agent wants without an additional inducement. Further, Yukl and Tracey (1992) found that exchange was used more in a lateral direction and least in an upward direction. In experiment 2 we will test both ITs in an upward direction and since the use of a single soft tactic as ingratiation is more effective than using a single hard tactic (Yukl & Falbe, 1990), we hypothesize that using ingratiation as an IT will yield better results than using

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exchange when trying to obtain any of the three work outcomes. Hence, we hypothesize that:

**Hypothesis 3:** *Participants in the ingratiation condition will be more inclined to provide a) a positive competence assessment, b) give job promotion, and c) give salary increase than the participants in the exchange condition.*

To further investigate the findings in the control condition in experiment 1, we want to compare the ingratiation and exchange with the setting where no ITs are used. Depending on our results, we hope to understand which psychological phenomenon the control condition really consists of. Ingratiation is perceived as the most effective IT on work outcomes (Higgins et al., 2003) and although the results for exchange may be seen as less clear on various work outcomes, we argue that the use of both ITs will be more beneficial than the use of an influence free condition. Therefore we hypothesize that:

**Hypothesis 4:** *Participants in the two IT conditions will be more inclined to provide a) positive competence assessment, b) job promotion, and c) salary increase than participants in the control condition.*

### **Method.**

**Participants.** The sample in experiment 2 will, as in experiment 1, be a convenience sample. The convenience sample will consist of Norwegian speaking students, people we have in our network and hopefully from at least two organizations. The data collection will be conducted through three different channels; by paper at the BI library, through an electronic questionnaire we will send to the participants by e-mail and through a social network such as Facebook. We want to continue to use a between-subject design, where each participant is assigned to only one treatment condition, either one of the two experimental groups or the control group. We aim for 100 participants in each condition. Based on experience from experiment 1, gender and age will be controlled for by adding two new items at the end of the questionnaires. In line with experiment 1, we will instruct the participants, either verbally or by e-mail, to read through a text before

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answering five questions. Following, we will inform them that there is no right or wrong answer to the questions and that all responses will be confidential.

***Measures.*** We will use the same three dependent variables: competence assessment, job promotion, and salary increase. Also, a seven-point Likert scale will be applied. The questionnaires measuring the independent variables, shall be inspired by the Influence Behaviour Questionnaire by Yukl et al. (2008). We will replicate the control condition and its text from the first experiment and by including the two demographical variables to the participants, we may gain valuable understanding of these two moderator variables.

***Experiment procedure and text creation.*** We will make new experiment texts, one for each condition. The texts handed out to the participants will be in Norwegian in order to avoid potential language problems considering that Norwegian is the participants' native language. In order to prevent mistakes that might have been overlooked in the text creation phase, a pilot study will be conducted. As in the first experiment, this can give us valuable insights from the respondents and new reflections. We aim for distributing ten questionnaires for each condition, and namely get thirty respondents in total.

***Data Analysis.*** We would like to run descriptive statistics in SPSS in order to find mean scores, and compare them. Subsequent, in order to determine whether the means of the different conditions are significantly different from one another we would like to run a one-way ANOVA. Next, a Post-Hoc analysis can give indications of whether the conditions are significantly different from each other on all three outcomes. Finally, we will run a moderator regression analysis in order to study the variables' moderator effects. The approaches would help is determine whether we have to reject or find support for hypothesis 3 and 4.

### **Experiment 3**

The purpose with this experiment is to study combinations of ITs in order to find the combinations that are the most effective in achieving specific work outcomes.

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Higgins et al. (2003) found no studies examining the effects of ITs combinations on work outcomes. This highlights a possible gap in the literature we find important to investigate. We claim that employee use of ITs in influence attempts most likely are done in combination rather than using different ITs alone. We want to combine ingratiation and rational persuasion as one condition and assertiveness and rational persuasion as the second combination.

Higgins et al. (2003) argue that rational persuasion in combination with ingratiation increases the likelihood to achieve ones work outcomes. Yukl et al. (2008) argue that ingratiation could be effective as a supplementary tactic to one or more of the core tactics, which are consultation, rational persuasion, collaboration, and inspirational appeals. Further, Yukl and Falbe's (1990) findings state that two soft tactics or a combination of one soft and one hard gave better results than any combination of hard tactics. Research has found that assertiveness can be useful for eliciting compliance, especially when combined with rational persuasion (Falbe & Yukl, 1992). As rational persuasion is the most used IT (Yukl & Falbe, 1990), and ingratiation is perceived as the most effective IT on work outcomes (Higgins et al., 2003), we argue that a combination of these two tactics in an influence attempt will yield better results than the assertiveness and rational persuasion condition. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

**Hypothesis 5:** *Participants in the condition with two soft tactics will be more inclined to provide a) positive competence assessment, b) job promotion, and c) salary increase than participants in the hard and soft tactic condition.*

### **Method.**

**Participants.** The sample in this experiment will, as in the previous experiments, be a convenience sample. The convenience sample will consist of Norwegian speaking students, participants we have in our network and hopefully from at least two organizations. The data collection will be conducted through three different channels; by paper at the BI library, though an electronic questionnaire we will send to the participants by e-mail and through Facebook. We want to continue to use a between-subject design, were each participant is

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assigned to only one treatment condition, either one of the two experimental groups or the control group. We aim for 100 participants in each condition. Based on experience from the previous experiments, gender and age will be controlled for. Following, we will instruct the participants, to read through a text before answering the five questions. Finally, we will inform them that there is no right or wrong answers to the questions and that all responses will be confidential.

**Measures.** In this experiment we keep the three dependent variables: competence assessment, job promotion, and salary increase. Also, a seven-point Likert scale is applied. The measures of the independent variables, are inspired by the Influence Behaviour Questionnaire by Yukl et al. (2008).

**Experiment procedure and text creation.** As we study combinations of different tactics, we aim to make a text that interfuses the two tactics for each condition describing Robert. Also, in this text, Robert will express his want for the job as a project manager. We will make use of the texts from the previous experiments and combine them into new experiment texts. The texts will be in Norwegian in order to avoid potential language problems considering that Norwegian is the participants' native language. In order to prevent mistakes that might have been overlooked in the text creation phase, a pilot study will be conducted. As earlier accomplished, we aim to complete a pilot study by distributing ten questionnaires for each condition, and namely get twenty respondents in total.

**Data Analysis.** We would like to run descriptive statistics in SPSS in order to find mean scores, and compare them. Subsequent, in order to determine whether the means of the different conditions are significantly different from one another we would like to run a one-way ANOVA. Next, a Post-Hoc analysis can give indications of whether the conditions are significantly different from each other on all three outcomes. Finally, a moderator regression analysis will be done based on gender and age. These approaches would help us determine whether we have to reject or find support for hypothesis 5.

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**Appendices****Appendix 1: Plan for future progress**

<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Agenda</b>
31.01.13.	Have the experiment plans, the experiment texts, as well as the research design completed for supervision
27.03.13.	Data collection completed
16.06.13.	1 <sup>st</sup> draft handed in to supervisor
30.06.13.	Send the thesis to text editing
1.7. - 31.7.13.	Summer holiday
1.08.13.	The work continues
30.08.13.	Submitting the final thesis

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**Appendix 2a: Rational Persuasion, English version**

Suppose you are a manager in a Norwegian telephone company. The telephone company is facing different challenges. To solve some of these challenges, you and the CEO of the company establish a project group responsible for coming up with new creative business solutions. Robert, one of your subordinates, is interested in the position as Project Manager and he has now sent you a letter where he is sharing his thoughts:

*“As you probably know, I have a master’s degree in finance from a well-known business school and I have shown good results during my time in the company. These results can be documented. In addition to having higher education, I also have several years of experience from various companies in different industries. This could be the some of the reasons why my colleagues asks for my guidance and help. To ensure that we get the best perspective to base our decisions upon, my background and expertise can be useful tools in order to be effective and cost efficient in different settings. We have a lot of talents in this organization, and I believe I have the ability to utilize this talent. Considering the situation the organization currently is in, I believe my competences can be of great advantage in a project manager position. Last week for instance, our CEO praised my effort and hard work that I have put in over time.”*

**Based on this letter, consider the following questions. Please circle around your answer:**

**1. How competent do you perceive Robert to be?**

Very incompetent 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very competent

**2. How willing are you to recommend Robert to the position as Project Manager?**

Very reluctant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very willing

**3. If Robert is to start as Project Manager he wants a salary increase. How willing are you to give Robert a salary of 20% more than he has in his present job?**

Very reluctant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very willing

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**Appendix 2b: Rational Persuasion, Norwegian version**

Se for deg at du er mellomleder i et norsk telekommunikasjonsselskap, som står overfor en del utfordringer. For å løse disse problemene har du, i samråd med daglig leder, besluttet å opprette en prosjektgruppe med ansvar for å komme opp med nye og kreative forretningsideer. En av dine ansatte, Robert, er interessert i stillingen som prosjektleder for denne gruppen og har sendt deg følgende tekst:

*“Som du vet, så har jeg en mastergrad i finans fra en meget velkjent institusjon og jeg kan dokumentere gode resultater i løpet av min tid som ansatt i dette selskapet. I tillegg til høyere utdanning har jeg også flere års erfaring fra flere bedrifter innen ulike industrier. Dette kan være en av grunnene til at mine kolleger spør akkurat meg om hjelp og råd når de er usikre. Jeg mener at min bakgrunn og ekspertise utgjør gode verktøy for å sørge for at vi får belyst de viktigste perspektivene på en god måte før vi tar en beslutning som vil være både kreativ og inntektsgenererende i ulike settinger. Vi har mange talenter i denne organisasjonen og jeg tror jeg har evnen til å utnytte disse talentene til det beste for bedriften. Med tanke på situasjonen bedriften befinner seg i, mener jeg min kompetanse kan komme godt til nytte i en prosjektlederstilling. Senest i forrige uke fikk jeg skryt av administrerende direktør for mitt bidrag og hardt arbeid jeg har lagt ned over tid.”*

**Basert på denne teksten vil vi nå at du svarer på disse følgende spørsmålene ved å tegne en sirkel rundt ditt svar.**

**1. Hvor kompetent anser du Robert for å være?**

Svært inkompetent 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Svært kompetent

**2. Hvor villig er du til å anbefale Robert for stillingen som prosjektleder?**

Svært motvillig 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Svært villig

**3. Hvis Robert får denne stillingen vil han komme til å ønske høyere lønn.**

**Hvor villig er du til å gi ham 20 % mer enn han har i sin nåværende jobb?**

Svært motvillig 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Svært villig

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**Appendix 3a: Assertiveness, English version**

Suppose you are a manager in a Norwegian telephone company. The telephone company is facing different challenges. To solve some of these challenges, you and the CEO of the company establish a project group responsible for coming up with new creative business solutions. Robert, one of your subordinates, is interested in the position as Project Manager and he has now sent you a letter where he is sharing his thoughts:

*“As you probably know, I have a master’s degree in finance from a well-known business school and I have clearly shown good results during my time in the company. In addition, I have several years of experience from various companies in different industries. Often my colleagues need my guidance and help. I might have to check that they actually do what they should do, and if not, I might push them in the right direction. It is not difficult for me to find another job or focus more on myself instead of putting the company first. Loosing me as an employee will be a huge loss for the company and I expect you to make the right decision. Hiring me is the best option.”*

**Based on this letter, consider the following questions. Please circle around your answer:**

**1. How competent do you perceive Robert to be?**

Very incompetent 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very competent

**2. How willing are you to recommend Robert to the position as Project Manager?**

Very reluctant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very willing

**3. If Robert is to start as Project Manager he wants a salary increase. How willing are you to give Robert a salary of 20% more than he has in his present job?**

Very reluctant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very willing

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**Appendix 3b: Assertiveness, Norwegian version**

Se for deg at du er mellomleder i et norsk telekommunikasjonsselskap, som står overfor en del utfordringer. For å løse disse problemene har du, i samråd med daglig leder, besluttet å opprette en prosjektgruppe med ansvar for å komme opp med nye og kreative forretningsideer. En av dine ansatte, Robert, er interessert i stillingen som prosjektleder for denne gruppen og har sendt deg følgende tekst:

*”Som du vet, så har jeg en mastergrad i finans fra en meget velkjent institusjon og jeg har tydelig vist gode resultater i løpet av min tid som ansatt i dette selskapet. I tillegg har jeg mange års erfaring fra flere bedrifter innen ulike industrier. Jeg gir mine kolleger ofte hjelp og råd. Det hender jeg dobbeltsjekker at de faktisk gjør det de burde gjøre, og hvis de ikke gjør det må jeg presse dem i riktig retning. Det ville ikke vært unaturlig for meg å fokusere på min egen karriere fremfor å bli her i denne stillingen jeg har nå. Det ville ikke vært vanskelig for meg å skaffe meg en annen jobb. Jeg fortjener å få stillingen som prosjektleder, noe som også vil være til det beste for bedriften. Å miste meg vil være et stort tap for bedriften og jeg regner med at du tar den riktige avgjørelsen. Å ansette meg er den beste løsningen.”*

**Basert på denne teksten vil vi nå at du svarer på disse følgende spørsmålene ved å tegne en sirkel rundt ditt svar.**

**1. Hvor kompetent anser du Robert for å være?**

Svært inkompetent 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Svært kompetent

**2. Hvor villig er du til å anbefale Robert for stillingen som prosjektleder?**

Svært motvillig 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Svært villig

**3. Hvis Robert får denne stillingen vil han komme til å ønske høyere lønn.**

**Hvor villig er du til å gi ham 20 % mer enn han har i sin nåværende jobb?**

Svært motvillig 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Svært villig

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**Appendix 4a: Control condition, English version**

Suppose you are a manager in a Norwegian telephone company. The telephone company is facing different challenges. To solve some of these challenges, you and the CEO of the company establish a project group responsible for coming up with new creative business solutions. Robert, one of your subordinates, is interested in the position as Project Manager. His supervisor has sent you a description of him and asked you to give an evaluation of him.

*“Robert has a master’s degree in finance from a well-known business school and has shown good results during his time in the company. In addition to having higher education, he also has several years of experience from various companies in different industries. His colleagues ask for his guidance and help. To ensure that the project group gets the best perspective to base their decisions upon, Robert’s background and expertise can be useful tools in order to be effective and cost efficient in different settings. We have a lot of talents in this organization, and Robert has the ability to utilize this talent. Considering the situation the organization currently is in, Robert’s competencies can be of great advantage in a project manager position. Last week for instance, our CEO praised his effort and hard work that he had put in over time.”*

**Based on this letter, consider the following questions. Please circle around your answer:**

**1. How competent do you perceive Robert to be?**

Very incompetent 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very competent

**2. How willing are you to recommend Robert to the position as Project Manager?**

Very reluctant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very willing

**3. If Robert is to start as Project Manager he wants a salary increase. How willing are you to give Robert a salary of 20% more than he has in his present job?**

Very reluctant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very willing

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**Appendix 4b: Control condition, Norwegian version**

Se for deg at du er HR-medarbeider i et norsk telekommunikasjonsselskap, som står overfor en del utfordringer. For å løse disse problemene har daglig leder besluttet å opprette en prosjektgruppe med ansvar for å komme opp med nye og kreative forretningsideer. En ansatt i bedriften, Robert, er interessert i stillingen som prosjektleder for denne gruppen. I den forbindelse har daglig leder sendt deg en beskrivelse av Robert og bedt deg om å gjøre en vurdering av ham.

*”Robert har en mastergrad i finans fra en velkjent institusjon og har vist gode resultater i løpet av sin tid som ansatt i selskapet. I tillegg til høyere utdanning har han også flere års erfaring fra flere bedrifter innen ulike industrier. Hans kolleger spør ham om hjelp og råd når de er usikre. Roberts ekspertise kan utgjøre gode verktøy for at prosjektgruppen får belyst de viktigste perspektivene på en god måte før de tar en beslutning som vil kunne være både kreativ og inntektsgenererende i ulike settinger. Det er mange talenter i denne organisasjonen og Robert kan ha evnen til å utnytte disse talentene til det beste for bedriften. Med tanke på situasjonen bedriften befinner seg i, kan Roberts kompetanse komme til nytte i en prosjektlederstilling. Robert har også mottatt skryt fra administrerende direktør for sitt bidrag og hardt arbeid.”*

**Basert på denne teksten vil vi nå at du svarer på disse følgende spørsmålene ved å tegne en sirkel rundt ditt svar.**

**1. Hvor kompetent anser du Robert for å være?**

Svært inkompetent 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Svært kompetent

**2. Hvor villig er du til å anbefale Robert for stillingen som prosjektleder?**

Svært motvillig 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Svært villig

**3. Hvis Robert får denne stillingen vil han komme til å ønske høyere lønn.****Hvor villig er du til å gi ham 20 % mer enn han har i sin nåværende jobb?**

Svært motvillig 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Svært villig

**Appendix 5: Descriptive statistics**

**Descriptives**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound			
RCompentent	Control group	50	5.78	.932	.132	5.52	6.04	2	7
	Rational persuasion	50	5.02	1.097	.155	4.71	5.33	2	7
	Assertiveness	50	4.30	1.313	.186	3.93	4.67	2	7
	Total	150	5.03	1.271	.104	4.83	5.24	2	7
RPromotion	Control group	50	5.82	.941	.133	5.55	6.09	3	7
	Rational persuasion	50	4.88	1.223	.173	4.53	5.23	2	7
	Assertiveness	50	3.44	1.593	.225	2.99	3.89	1	7
	Total	150	4.71	1.607	.131	4.45	4.97	1	7
RSalary	Control group	50	4.76	1.117	.158	4.44	5.08	1	7
	Rational persuasion	50	4.34	1.379	.195	3.95	4.73	1	7
	Assertiveness	50	3.34	1.394	.197	2.94	3.74	1	6
	Total	150	4.15	1.425	.116	3.92	4.38	1	7

**Appendix 6: One-way ANOVA**

**ANOVA**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
RCompentent	Between Groups	54.773	2	27.387	21.637	.000
	Within Groups	186.060	147	1.266		
	Total	240.833	149			
RPromotion	Between Groups	143.693	2	71.847	43.827	.000
	Within Groups	240.980	147	1.639		
	Total	384.673	149			
RSalary	Between Groups	53.213	2	26.607	15.672	.000
	Within Groups	249.560	147	1.698		
	Total	302.773	149			

**Appendix 7: Post Hoc Tukey HSD**

**Multiple Comparisons**

Tukey HSD

Dependent Variable	(i) itacticr1a2c0	(j) itacticr1a2c0	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
RCompentent	Control group	Rational persuasion	.760 <sup>*</sup>	.225	.003	.23	1.29
		Assertiveness	1.480 <sup>*</sup>	.225	.000	.95	2.01
	Rational persuasion	Control group	-.760 <sup>*</sup>	.225	.003	-1.29	-.23
		Assertiveness	.720 <sup>*</sup>	.225	.005	.19	1.25
	Assertiveness	Control group	-1.480 <sup>*</sup>	.225	.000	-2.01	-.95
		Rational persuasion	-.720 <sup>*</sup>	.225	.005	-1.25	-.19
RPromotion	Control group	Rational persuasion	.940 <sup>*</sup>	.256	.001	.33	1.55
		Assertiveness	2.380 <sup>*</sup>	.256	.000	1.77	2.99
	Rational persuasion	Control group	-.940 <sup>*</sup>	.256	.001	-1.55	-.33
		Assertiveness	1.440 <sup>*</sup>	.256	.000	.83	2.05
	Assertiveness	Control group	-2.380 <sup>*</sup>	.256	.000	-2.99	-1.77
		Rational persuasion	-1.440 <sup>*</sup>	.256	.000	-2.05	-.83
RSalary	Control group	Rational persuasion	.420	.261	.244	-.20	1.04
		Assertiveness	1.420 <sup>*</sup>	.261	.000	.80	2.04
	Rational persuasion	Control group	-.420	.261	.244	-1.04	.20
		Assertiveness	1.000 <sup>*</sup>	.261	.001	.38	1.62
	Assertiveness	Control group	-1.420 <sup>*</sup>	.261	.000	-2.04	-.80
		Rational persuasion	-1.000 <sup>*</sup>	.261	.001	-1.62	-.38

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.